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UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST

Report of the Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

Rapporteur: Mr. Svein AASS (Norway)

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Origin and background of the Working Group

1. The Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) was established by the General Assembly under resolution 2656 (XXV) of 7 December 1970 to study all aspects of the financing of the Agency. In that resolution, the Assembly requested the Working Group to assist the Secretary-General and the Commissioner-General of UNRWA in reaching solutions to the problems posed by the Agency's financial crisis.

2. At the twenty-fifth session and all those that followed, the General Assembly considered the reports submitted to it by the Working Group, 1/ and adopted resolutions commending the efforts of the Working Group and requesting it to continue them for a further year. 2/

3. The Working Group consists of the representatives of France, Ghana, Japan, Lebanon, Norway, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America. The Chairman of the Working Group is Mr. Huseyin Celem of Turkey.

B. Consideration of the report of the Working Group at the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly

4. The report of the Working Group on its activities in 1994 (A/49/570) was considered by the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session under agenda item 77, entitled "United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East". At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 23 September 1994, the General Assembly decided to include this item in its agenda and to allocate it to the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee), which considered it at its 15th to 17th and 28th meetings, from 1 to 3 and on 30 November 1994.

5. At the 28th meeting of the Committee, on 30 November 1994, the representative of the Netherlands introduced a draft resolution entitled "Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East" (A/C.4/49/L.14), sponsored by Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malaysia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the Philippines, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

6. Under the terms of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would:

(a) Commend the Working Group for its efforts to assist in ensuring the Agency's financial security;

(b) Take note with approval of the report of the Working Group;

(c) Request the Working Group to continue its efforts, in cooperation with the Secretary-General and the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, for the financing of the Agency for a further period of one year;

(d) Request the Secretary-General to provide the necessary services and assistance to the Working Group for the conduct of its work.

7. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote.

8. At its 83rd plenary meeting, on 9 December 1994, the General Assembly considered the draft resolution regarding the Working Group, which had been recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee), together with other draft resolutions under this item. At the same meeting, the Assembly adopted the draft resolution without a vote as resolution 49/35 B.

II. ACTIVITIES OF THE WORKING GROUP DURING 1995

9. Throughout the year, the members of the Working Group have followed with concern the difficulties experienced by the Agency and, in particular, the serious financial situation it continued to face. The Working Group held two meetings, on 14 September and 13 October 1995, to consider the recent developments in the Agency's financial situation and to prepare its report to the General Assembly. The Working Group adopted its report at its meeting on 13 October 1995.

10. At its 113th meeting, on 14 September 1995, the Working Group heard the Comptroller of UNRWA, who submitted an up-to-date report on the financial situation of the Agency. The Working Group gave further consideration to the Comptroller's report at its 114th meeting, on 13 October 1995 (see sect. III below).

III. FINANCIAL SITUATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST

11. By the end of 1994, the recorded financial balance of UNRWA for the year showed expenditures of $265.8 million on the Agency's regular programmes, against income from contributions of $298.2 million, leaving a book surplus of $32.4 million. Included in this surplus, however, were late contributions of $38.4 million, received and recorded in 1994 but intended for the 1993 regular programme of the Agency. If this amount is applied to the 1994 accounts, the result is a deficit of $6 million in expenditure over actual income in 1994. This shortfall reduced the Agency's working capital from $22.6 million at the beginning of 1994 to $16.6 million at the end of 1994. Separately from the activities financed under the Agency's regular budget UNRWA continued in 1994 to operate a special fund to cover emergency activities in Lebanon, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, known as EMLOT (Extraordinary Measures in Lebanon and the Occupied Territory). Total expenditure in 1994 for those activities amounted to $13.4 million, against a total income of $7.9 million, leaving a deficit of

$5.5 million which had to be funded out of working capital. The Agency also operated three "extrabudgetary" project funds in 1994: the Expanded Programme of Assistance (EPA); the European Gaza Hospital fund and the Peace Implementation Programme (PIP). Established in 1988 with the aim of improving living conditions and the physical infrastructure in the Agency's area of operations, with special emphasis on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, EPA was basically non-recurrent in nature, and became redundant with the establishment of PIP in 1993. The Agency began to phase out EPA as projects were completed. PIP, which was introduced in October 1993 following the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the Government of Israel, aimed to demonstrate to the refugee community throughout the region the tangible benefits of the peace process through projects to develop infrastructure, improve living conditions and generate employment. Projects under implementation that were funded under the first phase of PIP, which ended in September 1994, amounted to $85.7 million. Construction of the European Gaza Hospital was being financed largely by a contribution from the European Union.

12. With the Agency having begun 1995 with a $6 million deficit, the financial prospects for the year were not favourable. The growth of contributions was not keeping pace with the rising number of UNRWA beneficiaries and unavoidable cost increases owing to inflation. Unexpected emergency needs arising in the area of operations required additional funds. In order to reduce expenditure, UNRWA had introduced a number of austerity measures in early 1993, which were carried forward into 1994 and 1995, with a negative impact on the quality of Agency services. Additional cost-saving measures were introduced in September 1994. By the last quarter of 1995, the Agency's estimated deficit was $4 million. This figure would be $16 million if it included the $12 million reserve for salary increases for 21,000 area staff, which was frozen as a result of the deficit. However, a continuing freeze on salaries, which places UNRWA area staff at a disadvantage compared with employees in equivalent positions in the public administrations of the host countries of the refugees, is unsustainable over the longer term.

13. In meetings with major donors and other concerned government representatives in the past year, the Commissioner-General of UNRWA has once again appealed for help in finding ways to alleviate the structural deficit problem in the Agency's budget. An extraordinary initiative this year was the meeting held at Amman, in March, which was attended by representatives of major donor and host Governments, the Agency's Advisory Commission and the Palestinian Authority. Participants in the meeting expressed concern about the Agency's financial situation.

14. The past year has continued to see dramatic political developments in the area in which UNRWA operates, culminating in the signing on 28 September 1995 of an interim agreement between the Government of Israel and the PLO providing for the second phase of Israeli redeployment and the expansion of Palestinian self-rule as foreseen in the 1993 Declaration of Principles. The next phase of the peace process will involve, inter alia, negotiations on final status issues, including the refugee issue. As the Commissioner-General has pointed out, the parties to this process and the major donors to the Agency have asked UNRWA not only to maintain its existing services throughout its area of operations during

the interim period, but to play a larger role in helping to effect improvements in the social and economic spheres in which the Agency has acquired a special expertise. Donors have supported the ongoing peace process by devoting unprecedented resources to projects benefiting Palestinians, particularly in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, as well as in the Agency's other three fields of operation. Both phases of the Peace Implementation Programme have met with a particularly generous response from donors. Significantly, the budgets for PIP projects include programme support costs, which have alleviated some of the burden on the Agency's own resources and infrastructure in undertaking ambitious projects in environmental health, income-generation, shelter-rehabilitation, and the construction of schools, health centres and other facilities. Nevertheless, some of the additional tasks that the Agency has been asked to carry out to assist the Palestinian people during this period will inevitably have financial implications. The prospect of the eventual phasing out of UNRWA, which will become more apparent as the political process unfolds, has also raised the issue of termination indemnities which will have to be paid to the Agency's area staff when the Agency begins to cease operations and hand over its functions to other authorities. Donors have agreed that the Agency should begin to include a provision for these termination indemnities in its budget. Another development with potential financial implications for UNRWA is the decision by the Secretary-General, endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 49/35 A, that the Headquarters of the Agency should be relocated to its area of operations, mainly to the Gaza Strip. The Agency's donors have stipulated that the cost of the relocation should not in any way be financed out of the regular budget or established project resources of the Agency. To date, however, contributions to the special fund established by the Agency to cover the costs of the move have fallen considerably short of the budget for the move arrived at in consultation between UNRWA and the Secretariat of the United Nations. While proceeding with the first phases of the move as funds have become available, the Commissioner-General has appealed to donors to help make up this shortfall.

IV. CONCLUDING REMARKS

15. The Working Group is concerned to note that UNRWA has been able to carry out its regular activities once again only by drawing on its working capital reserves in 1994 and that it expects to have a shortfall in its budget again in 1995. The Working Group is particularly concerned about the negative cumulative effect of austerity measures that the Agency has had to take, and to carry over from year to year, in order to reduce its chronic budget deficits.

16. The Working Group commends the Commissioner-General for his efforts at fund-raising, which include a tireless schedule of regular visits to donor countries, as well as informal meetings at Amman and Vienna with major donors and others to explain the Agency's programmes and to discuss its problems and prospects in the context of the evolving situation in the Near East. The Working Group particularly joins the Agency in expressing appreciation to donors, especially those that increased their contributions or expressed an interest in contributing for the first time. It notes in particular that the efforts of the Commissioner-General and his staff towards raising funds for PIP have succeeded in attracting financial support for UNRWA programmes and projects from some donors at levels surpassing those of their previous contributions to

UNRWA. The Working Group joins the Commissioner-General in expressing the hope that the example set by these donors will be followed by others.

17. The Working Group shares the Commissioner-General's concern that the activities forming the core of UNRWA services to Palestine refugees, namely, education, health care and relief and social services, are increasingly vulnerable owing to the Agency's chronic budget deficits. It is a source of great concern that the Agency has been unable to raise the funds needed to restore cuts and other austerity measures first enacted two years ago. As the Commissioner-General has pointed out, while every effort is being made to streamline and rationalize the Agency's operations to avoid a reduction in services to the refugees, cost-saving measures can only be taken so far. If funding shortfalls continue, the Agency will have no choice but to effect substantive reductions in its programme activities. The Working Group must point out once again how unfortunate it would be if the substantial social and economic benefits promised by programmes such as PIP should be undermined by the inability of the international community to provide the resources needed to preserve the Agency's regular services.

18. The Working Group therefore strongly urges all Governments to bear in mind the foregoing considerations when deciding upon the level of their contributions to UNRWA for 1996 and urges Governments:

(a) That have not yet contributed to UNRWA, to start to do so;

(b) That have so far made only relatively small contributions, to increase their contributions;

(c) That in the past have made generous contributions to UNRWA, to continue to do so and to strive to increase them;

(d) To consider making additional contributions in support of ongoing emergency-related and special programmes, present and future phases of the Peace Implementation Programme, the operating costs of the European Gaza Hospital and the special fund established to cover the cost of the relocation of the Agency's headquarters to the area of operations, without in any way decreasing or diverting funds from their contributions to the Agency's regular programmes;

(e) To consider making special additional contributions for construction and other projects, again without affecting their contributions to the regular programmes.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fifth Session, annexes, agenda item 35, document A/8264; ibid., Twenty-sixth Session, annexes, agenda item 38, document A/8476; ibid., Twenty-seventh Session, annexes, agenda item 40, document A/8849; ibid., Twenty-eighth Session, annexes, agenda item 43, document A/9231; ibid., Twenty-ninth Session, annexes, agenda item 38, document A/9815; ibid., Thirtieth Session, annexes, agenda item 54, documents A/10268 and A/10334; ibid., Thirty-first Session, annexes, agenda item 53, document

A/31/279; ibid., Thirty-second Session, annexes, agenda item 55, document A/32/278; ibid., Thirty-third Session, annexes, agenda item 54, document A/33/320; ibid., Thirty-fourth Session, annexes, agenda item 50, document A/34/567; A/35/526; A/36/615; A/37/591; A/38/558; A/39/575; A/40/736; A/41/702; A/42/633; A/43/702; A/44/641; A/45/645; A/46/622; A/47/576; and A/48/554.

2/ Resolutions 2791 (XXVI) of 6 December 1971, 2964 (XXVII) of 13 December 1972, 3090 (XXVIII) of 7 December 1973, 3330 (XXIX) of 17 December 1974, 3419 (XXX) of 8 December 1975, 31/15 C of 23 November 1976, 32/90 D of 13 December 1977, 33/112 D of 18 December 1978, 34/52 D of 23 November 1979, 35/13 D of 3 November 1980, 36/146 E of 16 December 1981, 37/120 A of 16 December 1982, 38/83 B of 15 December 1983, 39/99 B of 14 December 1984, 40/165 B of 16 December 1985, 41/69 B of 3 December 1986, 42/69 B of 2 December 1987, 43/57 B of 6 December 1988, 44/47 B of 8 December 1989, 45/73 B of 11 December 1990, 46/46 B of 9 December 1991, 47/69 B of 14 December 1992 and 48/40 B of 10 December 1993.

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RIGHT OF PEOPLES OF SELF-DETERMINATION

Letter dated 28 September 1995 from the Permanent Representative of Liechtenstein to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a summary report on two international panel conferences organized within the framework of the Liechtenstein Research Programme on Self-Determination and as part of the activities on the occasion of the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, which were held in March and June 1995 respectively at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs of Princeton University.

Given the importance of the subject and its continued relevance to the international community, I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and the accompanying report circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 104.

(Signed) Claudia FRITSCHE
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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ANNEX

Summary report on the international panel conferences organized within the framework of the Liechtenstein Research Programme on Self-Determination at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs of Princeton University, 18 March 1995 and 9-10 June 1995

1. In 1991 His Serene Highness Prince Hans-Adam II, Head of State of the Principality of Liechtenstein, in his statement to the General Assembly on 26 September 1991, introduced an initiative on certain aspects of self-determination. This initiative was pursued at subsequent sessions of the General Assembly, and in particular as agenda item 108 (b) at the forty-eighth session.

2. In her statement to the General Assembly during the forty-ninth session, on 30 September 1994 (see A/49/PV.13), Her Excellency Mrs. Andrea Willi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Principality of Liechtenstein, said that the Liechtenstein initiative would be pursued as constructively as possible and that it would be most appropriate, and most likely to lead to fruitful results, for the subject to be developed further, at the current stage, within an academic framework. She announced that, accordingly, His Serene Highness had, as one element of Liechtenstein's contribution to the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, given a grant to Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs to establish a research programme on self-determination, to be conducted under the auspices of the Woodrow Wilson School's Center of International Studies, and that, within the framework of that research programme, two conferences were to be organized, in March and June 1995. They were dedicated to the subjects of "The Convention on Self-determination and Self-administration and related major issues" and "Communities and self-administration", respectively.

3. The two conferences were held at the times envisaged by Her Excellency, at Princeton University. As announced by Mrs. Willi, the conferences were open for participation to all States Members of the United Nations; invitations were also sent to selected non-governmental organizations, and to certain individuals, active in the field of self-determination and self-administration. On each of the three days on which the conferences were held some 70 to 80 people attended.

4. The conferences took the form of discussions based upon papers and commentaries written by selected individuals, of many differing nationalities and intellectual backgrounds but with one thing in common: that they were all outstanding experts in their various fields (international law, international relations and relevant social and cultural areas). The whole project was conducted on the basis of complete intellectual and academic freedom, so that the papers written by the various contributors and commentators were the sole responsibility of their authors, and were in no way influenced by the research programme.

5. The pattern followed throughout the conferences was the same. The starting-point for each session was the preparation, as part of the Woodrow

Wilson School's "Liechtenstein Research Programme on Self-determination", of various substantive papers by leading international authorities in their respective fields. At each session of the conference the writer of the paper under immediate consideration briefly summarized the main thrust of the paper, and this was followed by commentaries upon the paper by (usually) two other authoritative speakers. Participants in the conference were then invited to contribute to a general discussion on the themes opened up by the principal paper and the formal commentaries upon it.

6. The authors of the principal papers submitted to the conferences, and the commentators upon them, were identified in the programmes for the two conferences (see appendices I and II). Since many of the speakers, whether as writers of principal papers or as commentators or as members of the audience, held official positions with their Governments or with international organizations, it was understood at all times that speakers were contributing in their personal capacities and not in any official capacity which they might have had.

7. The focus of both conferences was the Liechtenstein initiative which had been introduced and discussed in the General Assembly. While the broad outlines (and in some respects much of the detail) of the ideas put forward by Liechtenstein had previously been explained in the debates in the General Assembly, no formal and comprehensive exposition of those ideas had been tabled in New York. To give the Princeton research programme a firm basis for further consideration, it was thought appropriate to provide participants in the programme with a draft Convention setting out, in formal international terms, the substance of the Liechtenstein proposals as they currently stood. As this draft Convention was at the centre of this phase of the research programme, the text (with an article-by-article explanatory commentary) was also made available to all those attending the two conferences, and each conference began with a short introductory presentation drawing attention to the main elements of the draft Convention.

8. The first conference, on 18 March 1995 (see appendix I), was opened by welcoming addresses by His Serene Highness Prince Hans-Adam II, Professor Harold T. Shapiro (President of Princeton University), Professor Wolfgang Danspeckgruber (Princeton University, and Director of the Liechtenstein Research Programme on Self-determination); and at the second conference, in June, the welcome on behalf of Princeton University was extended by Professor James Trussell.

9. The first substantive presentation was given by Professor Richard Falk (Princeton University), on "The right of self-determination under international law: the coherence of doctrine versus the incoherence of experience". Professor Falk identified three principal stages in the evolution of the right of self-determination as involving, first, the pre-legal stage after the First World War and up to the formulation of the Charter of the United Nations, where self-determination had been more a matter of political and moral weight than a right or duty in international law; secondly, the period after the Second World War and up to the end of the cold war, in which the emerging right of self-determination had concentrated on issues of decolonization; and thirdly, the period after the end of the cold war, which had been characterized by the

shattering of States and continuing controversy as to the application of self-determination in a context of (non-colonial) secession from existing States. Against this background Professor Falk offered observations on the potential for secessionist self-determination in relation to Quebec and the Kurdish people. A commentary on some of the issues raised by Professor Falk's paper was given by Professor Ruth Lapidoth (Hebrew University of Jerusalem).

10. Professor Falk's paper was followed by that presented by Professor Michael Doyle (Princeton University) on "The United Nations intervention and national sovereignty: the United Nations, the new globalism and an internationalist alternative". Professor Doyle noted the recent - particularly during the post-cold war period - use of Charter provisions so as to allow a radical expansion in the scope of collective intervention (leading to a crisis of over-commitment by the United Nations and a failure of United Nations Chapter VII enforcement), which had also narrowed the scope for unilateral State intervention. This widening of global authority and the shrinking of State sovereignty had fettered traditional rights of nation-States and led to an at least partial recognition of the rights of some oppressed nations. Commentaries on Professor Doyle's paper were presented by Dr. Danilo Türk (Permanent Representative of Slovenia to the United Nations).

11. Professor Jeffrey Herbst (Princeton University) presented his paper on "Global change and the future of existing Nation-States", in which he drew attention to the fact that the twentieth century had seen, on a large scale, the fracturing of large political units, leaving in their wake a large number of smaller States. This raised the question whether even smaller States, or indeed whether (particularly given the emergence of self-determination as a norm of the international community) other forms of political structure than the nation-State, might be viable in future. After examining the pressures on States to splinter into smaller units, Professor Herbst concluded that changes in the international economy had meant that smaller units were less likely now to be economically dysfunctional and that smaller States were thus more viable than had previously been the case. Commentaries on Professor Herbst's paper were made by Professor Daniel Elazar (Director, Center for the Study of Federalism, Temple University, Philadelphia) and Sir John Thompson (formerly Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations).

12. The next paper was that presented by Professor Henry Bienen (President, Northwestern University), on "Self-determination and self-administration in the former Soviet Union". He argued that in that context self-determination perhaps offered a less fruitful way forward than an emphasis on democracy and individual human rights, although self-determination and self-administration were still matters for concern as a means for the protection of human rights and since ethnically based internal conflicts might result in international conflicts. It was important to stress the fluid nature of ethnic identification, which argued for a focus on individuals rather than on groups, although the political reality of groups could not be denied. Commentaries on that paper were made by Professor Hurst Hannum (Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University) and Professor Georgiy Mirsky (Princeton University).

13. The paper presented by Professor Ian Lustick (University of Pennsylvania) was on "The other side of self-determination: State contraction in Britain and Ireland, France and Algeria, Israel and the West Bank-Gaza". Self-determination necessarily required the contraction of existing States, either in a territorial sense or at least in a functional sense by relinquishing certain State powers; but this involved the making by States of strategic decisions to contract the domain of their power. The political mechanisms and processes allowing (or preventing) such "voluntary" State contraction (except in colonial situations) had been little analysed, and in this perspective Professor Lustick considered three episodes of State contraction/self-determination - the United Kingdom and Ireland, France and Algeria, and Israel and the West Bank-Gaza. State contraction as an option could solve certain analytical problems and also allow political assessments of the conditions under which States could be expected to respond positively to demands for self-determination by territorially concentrated groups under their control. Commentaries on Professor Lustick's paper were presented by Professor Fred Riggs (University of Hawaii at Manoa) and Professor Michael Walzer (Institute of Advanced Studies, Princeton).

14. The last paper presented at the March conference was that presented by Dr. Emilio Cárdenas (Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations) and Ms. María Cañas (First Secretary, Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations), on "The limits of self-determination". They noted the lack of precision in the notion of self-determination and the subordination of self-determination to the need to preserve State sovereignty. Minorities had a right to autonomy as an expression of their internal self-determination; but this did not give them a right to secede or to undermine the bases of the policy within which they had their existence. Cooperation, solidarity and pluralism were the way forward, rather than nationalism. Current problems in this area probably had to be dealt with pragmatically, on a case-by-case basis; the protection of minorities should involve the granting of different degrees of autonomy and the promotion of democracy and the elimination of human rights abuses. Professor Gidon Gottlieb (University of Chicago) and Professor Stephen Marks (Princeton University) presented commentaries on that paper.

15. The second conference was held on 9 and 10 June 1995 (see appendix II). The first paper presented for discussion was that prepared by Professor Kay Warren (Princeton University) on "Language and the politics of self-expression: Mayan revitalization in Guatemala". In her paper Professor Warren focused on the cultural and educational problems of the indigenous Mayan communities within Guatemala, and in particular on the alienation of the Mayan communities which could be caused by a cultural assumption by the central authorities that Spanish language and national culture were superior to Mayan. She drew attention to steps proposed, and being taken, to reduce such alienation and to allow for the promotion of indigenous Mayan culture and self-determination within the structure of the Guatemalan State. Commentaries on the paper were offered by Professor Miguel Centeno (Princeton University) and Professor Deborah Levenson (Boston College).

16. That paper was followed by a paper on "Self-determination and nation-building in post-cold war Africa: problems and prospects", prepared by Professor Ibrahim Gambari (Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations) and Dr. Martin Uhomoibhi (Minister Counsellor, Permanent Mission of

Nigeria to the United Nations). They noted that while self-determination had been responsible for the liberation of most African States, it had also created problems for them as they tried to grapple with the demands of sovereignty made by many of their internal ethnic groups, demands which had given rise to serious conflicts. They considered various options and perspectives for realizing the goals and objectives of self-determination within the overall aim of nation-building. Self-determination was both a principle and a problem of contemporary statecraft, presenting a challenge to balance its support for imperiled sub-national groups striving for control over their affairs; that balance had to be pragmatically achieved if the adverse implications of unmoderated application of self-determination were not to undermine international peace and security. Their paper was the subject of commentaries by Mr. Lionel Hurst (Permanent Representative of Antigua and Barbuda to the United Nations) and Dr. Movindri Reddy (University of Chicago).

17. The next paper was that by Dr. Minxin Pei (Princeton University), on "Self-administration and the politics of ethnic accommodation in China". The paper addressed concerns about the Chinese State's ability to maintain control over its vast peripheral regions inhabited by ethnic minorities with aspirations for self-determination. The institutional framework permitted, on paper, a high degree of self-administration for regions with high concentrations of ethnic minorities, but in reality the devolution of decision-making power was severely limited at the provincial level although less so at the sub-provincial level. But the principal mechanism for mediating ethnic tensions had been a strategy of economic and political realism, involving State-sponsored migration of Han Chinese people into minority-inhabited areas, economic interdependence, and selective political repression. These strategies had been quite effective but now yielded diminishing returns; a policy of subregional self-administration would offer a practical compromise allowing grater autonomy for China's 54 minority groups. Commentaries on that paper were presented by Dr. Daniel Bell (Princeton University) and Dr. Paula Escarameia (Legal Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Portugal to the United Nations).

18. The final paper on the first day of the June conference was given by Professor Atul Kohli (Woodrow Wilson School) on "South Asia: secession, federalism and self-determination". The paper noted that India was a multicultural democracy, in which there had been several secessionist movements based on claims to the right of self-determination. Such movements ought to be expected in multicultural democracies (especially in developing countries) since, typically, the democratic setting encouraged group self-identification, which in turn led to a confrontation between the group and the central authority and eventually to a process of power negotiation, which finally led to a decline of the initial movement as its leaders were co-opted into the power structure and a degree of power-sharing and mutual accommodation between the movement and the central authorities was reached. Self-determination movements were part of a political process whereby the central State and a variety of groups discovered their relative power balances in emerging democracies. Commentaries on the paper were given by Professor Susanne Rudolph (University of Chicago) and Dr. Michael van den Walt van Pragg (Secretary-General, Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization).

19. The second day of the June conference began with a paper by Dr. Michele Lamont (Princeton University) on "Cultural dynamics in France, Canada and the United States". Self-determination, argued Dr. Lamont, was more likely to be a factor in communities whose members had a strong sense of common identity and fellow-feeling. In Quebec the basis for such strong collective identity was to be found in the history, culture, language and economics underlying the position of a francophone minority living within an anglophone majority, whereas in France the basic community differences were those between the national residents of the country and immigrants, characterizing a society with strong external boundaries against immigration, and in the United States the basic community differences were those grounded in race and poverty, characterizing a society with strong internal boundaries against the poor and African-Americans, but with weak eternal boundaries against immigration. The various bases of community differentiation referred to - race, poverty, culture, language, nationality - were present in all societies, but what was important was to examine how they were defined and combined with one another so as to define the collective identity of social groups, and thereby better to understand the specific patterns of social segmentation that generated movements for self-determination. Professor Robert Putnam (Harvard University) offered a commentary on Dr. Lamont's paper.

20. The next paper presented was that by Professor Francis Deng (Brookings Institute) on "Self-determination and national identity crisis: the case of the Sudan". Professor Deng presented an outline of the current problems in the Sudan, which would be (over-)simplified as a conflict between the primarily arabized and islamicized North of the country, and the traditionally African South, a division historically reinforced by British colonial policy: after independence the aim of the North had been to correct this separatism, while for the South northern domination had been seen as the replacing of British colonialism by the internal Arab variant. This had led to a crisis of national identity, both as to the Sudanese identity in the light of the State's history, and as the conflict between the group identities within the State which threatened the nation with disintegration. The paper recounted the process through which the conflicting identities of the North and South were shaped, discussed the generic concept of identity as a factor in conflict and how it manifested itself in the Sudanese case and examined the options now confronting the Sudan. Commentaries on that paper were presented by Giandomenico Picco (formerly Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, United Nations) and Professor Isawa Elaigwu (Director-General, National Council on Intergovernmental Affairs, Abuja, Nigeria).

21. Professor Wolfgang Danspeckgruber's paper was on "Self-determination, subsidiarity and regionalism in modern Europe". He argued that, particularly since the end of the cold war, self-determination and self-administration had been significant factors not only in central, eastern and south-eastern Europe but also as a counter-force to the drive towards deeper integration within the European Union. After reviewing the importance of self-determination for contemporary Europe, the paper examined mechanisms for self-determination and self-administration offered by various European organizations and discussed the role of self-determination initiatives in Belgium, South Tyrol and Catalonia. While enhanced self-administration could, preferably, lead to augmented degrees of autonomy rather than complete sovereignty and independence, and these

examples showed that persistent negotiation and a readiness to compromise could provide acceptable results, other developments east and south of Vienna showed that various factors could still lead to a striving for complete independence. Degrees of autonomy were not always satisfying to community aspirations, even though the community, rather than obtaining classical sovereignty, was in a transitional phase between forming part of a nation-State and becoming a member of a supranational body. That paper was the subject of commentaries by Mrs. Radha Kumar (Helsinki Citizens' Assembly) and Mr. Rob Zaagman (Adviser, High Commissioner for National Minorities, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)).

22. The final paper presented to the conference was on "Avoiding the iron cage of legislated communal identity", by Professor John Waterbury (Princeton University), who examined three contemporary situations: the conflicts in the Sudan and that of the Kurds of Iraq and Turkey with their respective Governments, as well as the system of representation in Lebanon. Since all political units were to some extent artificial and arbitrary, and communal identity was in important respects fluid, constantly undergoing a process of redefinition, one must always be inquiring into the nature of the "community" which sought to determine its own fate. What was needed, therefore, were democratic procedures which protected the right to form associations along whatever lines - ethnic, linguistic, religious or other - the population spontaneously desired, and what had to be avoided was the protection of named groups since thereby the aggrieved groups, and their persecutors, became locked into non-evolving structures (as was well illustrated by the history of the religious basis for political representation in Lebanon since 1926). Commentaries on that paper were presented by Mr. José Ayala-Lasso (United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights) and Professor Amitai Etzioni (George Washington University).

23. After the presentation of each paper and the commentaries upon it, discussion was thrown open to comments and questions from those attending the conferences. The ensuing exchange of views was lively and informative, reflecting the high personal qualities and experience of those who were participating. Given the extent to which many of the papers and commentaries touched on matters of great current political sensitivity, it was inevitable that the views expressed in the discussions varied between support for, and criticism of, the analyses offered by the speakers. While the nature of such wide-ranging discussions over the three days of the conferences precludes the drawing of any clear conclusions, one thread running consistently through the many interventions, without any dissenting voice, was that the issues raised by the Liechtenstein initiative, both in the United Nations and at the Princeton conferences, were timely and important, and deserved the most careful further consideration.

APPENDIX I

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY Liechtenstein Research Program on Self-Determination

Program of the First International Panel Conference

The Convention on Self-Determination and Self-Administration and Related Major Issues

March 18th, 1995

9.00

Welcome
Wolfgang Danspeckgruber
John Waterbury
President Harold T. Shapiro
H.S.H. Prince Hans-Adam II. of Liechtenstein

9.15

Sir Arthur Watts

The Liechtenstein Draft Convention on Self-Determination Through Self-Administration

10.00

Ruth Lapidoth

The Right of Self-Determination under International Law:
The Coherence of Doctrine versus the Incoherence of Experience
by *Richard Falk*

11.10

Danilo Türk
Jean Cot

The UN Intervention and National Sovereignty:
The United Nations, The New Globalism, and an Internationalist Alternative
by *Michael Doyle*

12.00

Daniel Elazar
Sir John Thompson

Global Change and the Future of Existing Nation-States
by *Jeffrey Herbst*

14.00

Hurst Hannum
Georgiy Mirsky

Self-Determination and Self-Administration in the Former Soviet Union
by *Henry Bienen*

15.00

Fred Riggs
Michael Walzer

The Other Side of Self-Determination: State Contraction in Britain and Ireland, France and Algeria, Israel and the West Bank-Gaza
by *Ian Lustick*

16.00

Gidon Gottlieb
Stephen Marks

The limits of Self-Determination
by *Emilio Cárdenas and María Fernanda Cañas*

APPENDIX II

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY Liechtenstein Research Program on Self-Determination

Program of the Second International Panel Conference

Communities and Self-Administration

9 and 10 June 1995

9.15

Welcome
James Trussel
H.S.H. Prince Hans-Adam II. of Liechtenstein

9.30

Sir Arthur Watts
Summary of Draft Convention: A Review

10.00

Miguel A. Centeno
Deborah Levenson

Language and the Politics of Self-Expression: Mayan Revitalization in Guatemala
by *Kay Warren*

11.30

Lionel A. Hurst
Movindri Reddy

Self-Determination and Nation-Building
in Post-Cold War Africa: Problems and Prospects
by *Ibrahim Gambari and Martin Uhomoibhi*

14.00

Daniel Bell
Paula Escarameia

Self-Administration and the Politics of Ethnic Accommodation in China
by *Minxin Pei*

15.15

Susanne Rudolph
Michael van den Walt van Praag

South Asia: Seccession, Federalism and Self-Determination
by *Atul Kohli*

SATURDAY ,10 June 1995

9.00

Sir Arthur Watts
A Brief Summary of Draft Convention

9.30

Robert Putnam

Cultural Dynamics in France, Canada, and the United States
by *Michele Lamont*

11.00

Giandomenico Picco
J. Isawa Elaigwu

Self-Determination and National Identity Crisis: The Case of the Sudan
by *Francis Deng*

13.30

Radha Kumar
Rob Zaagman

Self-Determination, Subsidiarity and Regionalization in Modern Europe
by *Wolfgang Danspeckgruber*

15.00

José Ayala-Lasso
Amitai Etzioni

Avoiding the Iron Cage of Legislated Communal Identity
by *John Waterbury*

16.15

Summary of Implications for Draft Convention
by *Sir Arthur Watts*

UNITED NATIONS

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2 October 1995

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Fiftieth session
Agenda item 103

ELIMINATION OF RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is prepared in pursuance of paragraphs 16 and 17 of General Assembly resolution 49/146 of 23 December 1994 with a view to supplementing the report of the Secretary-General to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1995 (E/1995/111 and Add.1).

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

A. Economic and Social Council

2. At its substantive session of 1995, the Economic and Social Council discussed the Programme of Action for the Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (resolution 49/146, annex) and declared that all forms of racism or racial discrimination, whether institutionalized or resulting from official doctrines of racial superiority or exclusivity, such as "ethnic cleansing", were among the most serious violations of human rights in the contemporary world and must be combated by all possible means.

3. In its resolution 1995/59 of 28 July 1995, the Council, inter alia, took note of the report of the Secretary-General on the Programme of Action, requested the Secretary-General to ensure that the necessary financial resources were provided for the implementation of the activities of the Third Decade during the bienniums 1994-1995 and 1996-1997 and recommended that the activities mentioned in the plan of activities to be carried out during the first third of the Third Decade (1994-1997), as set out in the previous report of the Secretary-General (E/1994/97), should be implemented.

4. Further, the Council invited the Secretary-General to do his utmost to establish a focal point within the Centre for Human Rights of the Secretariat, which would be responsible for reviewing information concerning specific recommendations on activities to be undertaken.

B. Joint meeting of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

5. A joint meeting between the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, with the participation of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, was organized on 8 August 1995 in view of the crucial role they play in combating racial discrimination and racism and for the purpose of reinforcing their actions and

cooperation within the framework of the Third Decade. The following points were discussed at the meeting:

(a) The role of the Committee and the Subcommission in the Third Decade;

(b) Preparation for the world conference against racism, racial and ethnic discrimination, xenophobia and other related contemporary forms of intolerance;

(c) Concrete proposals to combat racism and racial discrimination;

(d) Proposals for future steps on the cooperation between the two bodies.

6. The Committee and the Subcommission issued a joint statement in which they stated that they were meeting jointly to assess the possibilities of closer cooperation in the struggle against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and other contemporary forms of related intolerance, and were aware of the roles of the two bodies in the field of prevention, early warning and urgent procedures in situations involving massive violations of human rights. They were appalled by continuing reports of massive and gross violations of human rights in various regions of the world, including genocide and "ethnic cleansing", which were fuelled by policies of racial or ethnic discrimination and antagonism, particularly in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Rwanda, and welcomed the establishment of two ad hoc international criminal tribunals. They declared their strong determination to mobilize their efforts to eliminate, wherever it existed, all forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance; reiterated their absolute condemnation of the massive violations of human rights, in particular, genocide and the spreading practice of "ethnic cleansing", occurring in certain regions of the world and mainly in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Rwanda, and drew attention to the consequences on human rights and on the fate of large populations of the central role played in that regard by policies and practices of racial, xenophobic, ethnic and other related forms of discrimination. They continued to call for firm and urgent measures by the United Nations and the international community to put an end to these violations, to continue to fight policies and practices of racial discrimination, to help save human lives, to stop "ethnic cleansing", to help the return of refugees voluntarily and safely to their homes and to find just political solutions to existing racial, ethnic and related conflicts. They expressed their conviction that all perpetrators of massive violations of human rights must be brought to justice. Accordingly, the two bodies welcomed the establishment of the two current ad hoc international criminal tribunals and called upon the international community to give the tribunals all possible support, including making necessary changes to national laws. They called for the speedy establishment of a permanent international criminal court that would prosecute perpetrators of massive violations of human rights, including perpetrators of egregious acts of racial discrimination. They reminded all Governments of their obligation to ensure to all those under their jurisdiction, without any discrimination, security and peaceful coexistence between the different communities; and called upon the international community to respond compassionately and speedily to the needs of people displaced as a result of policies of racial and ethnic discrimination and to encourage States to receive generously as many of those displaced people as possible.

C. World conference against racism, racial and ethnic discrimination, xenophobia and other related contemporary forms of intolerance

7. In its decision 1995/294 of 25 July 1995, the Council approved the Commission's recommendation to the General Assembly to consider at its fiftieth session the possibility of convening a world conference against racism, racial and ethnic discrimination, xenophobia and other related contemporary forms of intolerance. 1/

D. Status of the Trust Fund for the Programme of Action for the Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination

8. Despite the commitments made by the international community, especially at the World Conference on Human Rights, held at Vienna from 14 to 25 June 1993, at which the rapid and complete elimination of all forms of racism and racial discrimination was declared to be a priority task of the international community, contributions to the Trust Fund for the Programme of Action for the Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination has remained below the levels hoped for. It is therefore certain that, unless a supplementary financing effort is made, very few of the activities planned for the 1994-1997 period will be carried out. It is important to note that contributors can allocate their contributions to whatever particular activities they deem especially worthy of interest within the context of the effort to combat racism and racial discrimination.

9. It may be worthwhile mentioning that the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1995/59 strongly appealed to all Governments, organizations and individuals in a position to do so to contribute generously to the Trust Fund, and to that end requested the Secretary-General to continue to undertake appropriate contacts and initiatives to encourage contributions.

10. The status of the Trust Fund as at 31 August 1995 is set out in the table below.

(United States dollars)

A. Statement of income and expenditure for the 20-month period of the biennium 1994-1995 ended 31 August 1995

Income	
Pledge contributions	19 931
Interest income	3 893
Miscellaneous	4 401
Total income	28 225

Expenditure	
Programme support costs	(541)
Total expenditure	(541)
Excess of income over expenditure	28 766

B. Statement of assets and liabilities as at 31 August 1995

Assets	
Cash	64 903
Accounts receivable	837
Total assets	65 740
	-
Liabilities	
Fund balance	
Balance available at 1 January 1994	36 974
Add: excess of income over expenditure	28 766
Balance available at 31 August 1995	65 740
Total liabilities and fund balance	65 740

III. ACTIVITIES BY NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

11. The Subcommittee on Racism, Racial Discrimination and Decolonization of the Special Committee of International NGOs on Human Rights in Geneva organized a series of non-governmental organization consultations on racism and education during the forty-seventh session of the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities from 8 to 22 August 1995, with the participation of experts of the Subcommission and the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination as discussion leaders of the topics of the consultations.

12. The consultations discussed the following:

(a) Education (in its broadest sense) as a factor of racism and a tool to eliminate it, with a brief introduction on how education sometimes perpetuated racism and the powerful tool it could be to help eradicate it and stressing that while education was an essential factor in the elimination of racism, it could not do it alone;

(b) Racism and the role of religious institutions. This consultation discussed how religion and particularly the religious institutions perpetuated racism, and how they could also be powerful agents for eliminating racism;

(c) The exchange of information and actions planned to strengthen cooperation among non-governmental organizations and other social forces (youth, trade unions, religious movements, media, artists and educators) and with the United Nations.

13. The Subcommittee invited the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to be the keynote speaker at the non-governmental organization conference on racism at 50 years of the United Nations on 16 and 17 October 1995.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1995, Supplement No. 4 (E/1995/23), chap. II, sect. B, decision 1995/104.

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Agenda item 44
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fiftieth year

Letter dated 2 October 1995 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government and further to our earlier letters concerning Israeli practices and repeated Israeli attacks in Southern Lebanon and the western Bekaa, I have the honour to inform you of a series of Israeli attacks that occurred during the first half of September 1995:

1 September 1995

Israeli forces shelled areas outside Kafr Tibnit, Nabatiyah al-Fawqa, Zawtar al-Sharqiyah and Zawtar al-Gharbiyah.

2 September 1995

Israeli forces shelled the area outside Jba' and the outskirts of Maydun.

3 September 1995

Israeli forces shelled areas outside Majdal Silm and Jumayjimah.

Israeli military aircraft overflew the areas of Nabatiya and Na'imah and dropped heat balloons.

4 September 1995

Israeli forces shelled areas outside Kafr Rumman, Nabatiya al-Fawqa, Arabsalim, Humin al-Fawqa, the course of the Zahrani River and the Iqlim al-Tuffah district.

5 September 1995

Israeli military aircraft overflew the Iqlim al-Tuffah district.

6 September 1995

Israeli forces shelled areas outside Arabsalim, Jarju', Ayn Bu Siwar, the Mlita hills, Jabal Safi, Jba' and Ayn Qana, with the result that a house in Jba was damaged and 7,000 square metres of fruit trees were burned outside Jba' and Ayn Qana.

Israeli forces proceeded to raze a house in the town of Rayhan for the purpose of building barricades to fortify their positions.

7 September 1995

Israeli forces shelled the periphery of Mashgharah and areas outside the town of Humin al-Fawqa, Arabsalim and Jarju'.

Israeli military aircraft overflew the districts of Nabatiya, Tibnin, Iqlim al-Tuffah and Sidon as well as the camps located there, breaking the sound barrier and carrying out mock attacks.

9 September 1995

Israeli forces shelled areas outside Tibnin, Bra'shit, Shaqra, Ayta al-Jabal and Haris.

10 September 1995

Israeli forces shelled Tibnin, Bra'shit, Haddatha, Haris, Ayta al-Jabal and Shaqra.

Israeli military aircraft overflew the districts of Nabatiya and Iqlim al-Tuffah, carrying out mock attacks.

11 September 1995

Israeli forces on two occasions shelled areas outside Tibnin, Bra'shit, Haddatha, Haris, Shaqra, Ayta al-Jabal, Ghanduriyah, Frun, Qallawiyah, Kafra, Yatar, Majdal Silm, Khirbat Silm, Tulin, Qabrikha and Sawwanah, with the result that one girl was wounded and one woman suffered a nervous breakdown.

Israeli military aircraft overflew the districts of Nabatiya, Tyre and the western Bekaa, breaking the sound barrier and carrying out a number of mock attacks.

Israeli helicopters combed the wadis and thickets around Bra'shit, Shaqra, Majdal Silm, Qabrikha, Tulin, Tibnin, Sawwanah, Khirbat Silm, Kafra and Yatar.

13 September 1995

Israeli forces shelled areas outside Tibnin, Ayta al-Jabal, Haddatha, Haris, Jarju', Arabsalim, Ayn Bu Siwar and the Jabal Safi and Mlita hills.

14 September 1995

Israeli military aircraft overflew the Alayh district.

Israeli forces shelled areas outside Qabrikha, Tulin and Majdal Silm.

15 September 1995

Fire broke out in Matn, outside the town of Kafr Uqab, as a result of the dropping of heat balloons by Israeli military aircraft.

17 September 1995

Israeli forces shelled areas outside Kafra, Yatar, Haris, Haddatha, Ayta al-Jabal and Tibnin.

The Lebanese Government strongly condemns the repeated Israeli attacks, which have brought enormous damage to property. It further condemns in the strongest terms the arbitrary practices against civilians that have prevented them from cultivating their fields, pursuing their occupations and earning their livelihoods.

Like previous attacks, this new series constitutes flagrant aggression against the sovereignty and independence of Lebanon and represents another flagrant violation of international law and fundamental human rights.

The continued violence is ultimately due to Israel's maintenance of its occupation and its refusal to comply with Security Council resolution 425 (1978), which calls for Israel's withdrawal to the internationally recognized boundaries and for the Lebanese Government to be allowed to extend its authority over all its territory by means of its legally constituted forces.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 44 of the provisional agenda, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Samir MOUBARAK
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS, INCLUDING ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS

Respect for the principles of national sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of States in their electoral processes

Report of the Secretary-General

1. In its resolution 49/180 of 23 December 1994 on respect for the principles of national sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of States in their electoral processes, the General Assembly, inter alia, reaffirmed that it was the concern solely of peoples to determine methods and to establish institutions regarding the electoral process, as well as to determine the ways for its implementation according to their constitution and national legislation and that, consequently, States should establish the necessary mechanisms and means to guarantee full and effective popular participation in those processes; reaffirmed also that any activities that attempted, directly or indirectly, to interfere in the free development of national electoral processes, in particular in the developing countries, or that were intended to sway the results of such processes, violated the spirit and letter of the principles established in the Charter of the United Nations and in the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations; strongly appealed to all States to refrain from financing or providing, directly or indirectly, any other form of overt or covert support for political parties or groups and from taking actions to undermine the electoral processes in any country; called upon the Commission on Human Rights to continue to give priority to the review of the fundamental factors that negatively affected the observance of the principles of national sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of States in their electoral processes and to report to the Assembly at its fiftieth session, through the Economic and Social Council; and requested the Secretary-General to

report to the Assembly at its fiftieth session on the implementation of the resolution, under the item entitled "Human rights questions".

2. The present report contains a summary of action taken by the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-first session pursuant to General Assembly resolution 49/180.

3. At its fifty-first session, held from 30 January to 10 March 1995, the Commission on Human Rights considered, under various items of its agenda, a number of country situations that involved questions relating to the organization and holding of elections. Although no specific action was taken by the Commission at that session to review the fundamental factors that negatively affected the observance of the principles of national sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of States in their electoral processes, as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 49/180, references were made in a number of resolutions to the issue of elections in the context of guaranteeing the free expression of the will of peoples and ensuring respect for national sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of the States concerned.

4. In its resolution 1995/7 of 17 February 1995 on the question of Western Sahara, the Commission on Human Rights, inter alia, reaffirmed that the objective to which all parties concerned subscribed was the holding of a free, regular and impartial referendum for the people of Western Sahara organized and supervised by the United Nations in cooperation with the Organization of African Unity and without any military or administrative constraint, in accordance with the settlement plan.

5. In its resolution 1995/8 of 17 February 1995 on violations of human rights in southern Africa, the Commission, inter alia, expressed its profound satisfaction at the entry into force of South Africa's new Constitution on 27 April 1994, the holding of democratic elections from 26 to 29 April 1994, the convening of South Africa's new Parliament on 5 May 1994 and the installation on 10 May 1994 of its President and Government of National Unity; and commended the Organization of African Unity, the Commonwealth, the European Union and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries for their support to the process of peaceful change culminating in the elections.

6. In its resolution 1995/9 of 17 February 1995 on monitoring and assisting the transition to democracy in South Africa, the Commission, inter alia, expressed its profound satisfaction at the entry into force of South Africa's new Constitution on 27 April 1994, the holding of one person/one vote elections from 26 to 29 April 1994, the convening of South Africa's new Parliament on 5 May 1994 and the installation on 10 May 1994 of its President and Government of National Unity.

7. In its resolution 1995/52 of 3 March 1995 on the situation of human rights in Togo, the Commission inter alia, welcomed the fact that Togo had set out on the road to democratic political change, and urged all Togolese to respect the outcome of the parliamentary elections held in February 1994 and to ensure the effective functioning of the democratically elected parliament.

8. In its resolution 1995/60 of 7 March 1995 on ways and means of overcoming obstacles to the establishment of a democratic society and requirements for the maintenance of democracy, the Commission, taking account of the fact that freedom of opinion and expression was reflected in a democratic society through an electoral system which allowed all tendencies, interests and feelings to obtain representation at the level of the executive and legislative power and, therefore, at all levels of power, inter alia, decided to examine, at its fifty-second session, ways and means of overcoming obstacles to the consolidation of democratic societies, taking into account the relation between democracy, development and human rights.

9. In its resolution 1995/69 of 8 March 1995 on the situation of human rights in Zaire, the Commission, inter alia, called in particular with a view to the holding of elections with universal suffrage, for continued and broadened efforts to assure full respect for the right to freedom of opinion and expression, in particular for all mass media, as well as freedom of association, assembly and peaceful demonstration; and urged strongly that all Zairian political forces respect the peaceful aspect of the democratic transition so that it be completed through the organization of free elections, taking into account the prerequisites set forth in the Constitutional Act of Transition.

10. In its resolution 1995/70 of 8 March 1995 on the situation of human rights in Haiti, the Commission, inter alia, welcomed the action taken by the International Civilian Mission to Haiti to protect and promote human rights and strengthen democratic institutions in Haiti and, in particular, its support for the holding of legislative elections on 4 and 25 June 1995, elections which were essential for such strengthening.

11. In its resolution 1995/72 of 8 March 1995 on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, the Commission, inter alia, again urged the Government of Myanmar to take, in conformity with the assurances given at various times, all necessary measures to guarantee democracy in full accordance with the will of the people as expressed in the democratic elections held in 1990, and to ensure that all political parties might freely exercise their activities.

12. Lastly, in its resolution 1995/74 of 8 March 1995 on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan, the Commission, inter alia, urged all the Afghan parties to intensify efforts aimed at achieving a comprehensive political solution leading to the cessation of armed confrontation and the establishment of a democratic government elected through free and fair elections based on the right to self-determination of the people of Afghanistan; and invited the United Nations to offer, upon request and with due regard to the Afghan tradition, advisory services and technical assistance concerning the drafting of the Constitution, which should embody internationally accepted human rights principles, and the holding of direct elections.

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Agenda item 31

COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 49/14 of 15 November 1994, on cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States, the General Assembly took note with satisfaction of the report of the Secretary-General (A/49/519), and requested the Secretariat of the United Nations and the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States, within their respective fields of competence, to intensify further their cooperation towards the realization of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the strengthening of international peace and security, economic development, disarmament, decolonization, self-determination and the eradication of all forms of racism and racial discrimination.

2. By the same resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to strengthen cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and other organizations and agencies of the United Nations system and the League of Arab States and its specialized organizations, in order to enhance their capacity to serve the mutual interests of the two organizations in the political, economic, social, humanitarian, cultural and administrative fields. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to coordinate follow-up action to facilitate the implementation of the proposals of a multilateral nature adopted at the Tunis meeting in 1983 and to take appropriate action regarding the proposals adopted at previous meetings.

3. The General Assembly decided that, in order to intensify cooperation and for the purpose of review and appraisal of progress, as well as to prepare comprehensive periodic reports, a general meeting between the United Nations system and the League of Arab States should take place once every two years, and inter-agency sectoral meetings should be organized annually on areas of priority and wide importance in the development of the Arab States.

4. The General Assembly recommended that, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations and the League of Arab States, the next general meeting on cooperation between the representatives of the secretariats of the United Nations system and the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States and its specialized organizations should be held during 1995. It further requested the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in cooperation with the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, to encourage periodic consultation between representatives of the Secretariat of the United Nations and the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States to review and strengthen coordination mechanisms with a view to accelerating implementation and follow-up action of multilateral projects proposals and recommendations adopted by the meetings between the two organizations.

5. The General Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its fiftieth session a progress report on the implementation of resolution 49/14.

II. CONSULTATIONS AND EXCHANGES OF INFORMATION

6. On 1 October 1994, the Secretary-General of the United Nations met with the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States at United Nations Headquarters. They discussed matters related to the cooperation between the two organizations and exchanged views on questions of interest to both, concerning Iraq, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, and the situation in Somalia.

7. The United Nations continued its cooperation with the League of Arab States on the question of Somalia. A United Nations representative attended the meeting on Somalia held by the League, jointly with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, at Cairo on 22 and 23 February 1995, under the chairmanship of the Secretary-General of the League. The participants agreed on the need to intensify joint efforts to assist the Somalis in achieving national reconciliation.

8. During the period under review, the secretariats of the United Nations and the League of Arab States, as well as the Office of the Permanent Observer for the League of Arab States to the United Nations, also continued to maintain close contact on other matters of mutual concern to the two organizations. High-level contacts included a meeting between the Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the Secretary-General of the League (Cairo, February 1995) during which it was agreed to review the current cooperation protocol agreement between the Commission and the League and to hold periodic meetings to review matters of mutual interest; the official visit of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to the League headquarters at Cairo, upon an invitation of the Secretary-General (September 1994); a meeting between the Coordinator of Operations for the West Bank and Gaza Strip at the headquarters of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and Arab League secretariat officials (Cairo, May 1995).

9. In addition, the Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO) visited the League in April 1994 and discussed with its Secretary-General issues of common interest. In his turn, the Secretary-General of the League visited ILO in June 1994 on the occasion of the International Labour Conference. In autumn 1994, the Secretary-General of the Arab League and the Vice-President of the World Bank (Middle East and North Africa region), on the occasion of launching a joint initiative, called for immediate action to confront the environmental crisis in the Arab world.

III. FOLLOW-UP ACTION ON PROPOSALS AGREED TO AT GENERAL MEETINGS BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM AND THE LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES

10. It may be recalled that at the joint meeting between the United Nations system and the League of Arab States, held at Geneva in July 1990 (see A/45/481/Add.1), it was decided to establish six sectoral areas of cooperation between the two organizations: international peace and security; food and agriculture; labour, trade, industry and environment; social affairs; education, science, culture and information; and communications.

11. A summary of the reports of the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system on their cooperation with the League of Arab States during the period under review is given below. This summary includes activities in the sectoral areas, as well as follow-up action on proposals adopted at the previous meetings, at Tunis in 1983 (see A/38/299 and Corr.1), Amman in 1985 (see A/40/481/Add.1) and Geneva in 1988, 1990 and 1993 (see A/43/509/Add.1, A/45/481/Add.1 and A/48/468/Add.1).

A. Department for Development Support and Management Services

12. The Department for Development Support and Management Services of the United Nations Secretariat has launched several initiatives for interdisciplinary and intersectoral collaboration with the League of Arab States. Department staff held meetings with the senior representatives of the League to discuss joint actions to organize a regional seminar on a new integrated approach for sustainable human development: spatial/sectoral development strategy for Arab countries. The League expressed its interest in such an activity, which could generate a dialogue between Arab countries on designing a framework for the coordination and coherence of human and sustainable economic and social development in the region. The Department is cooperating with the League in executing a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)-sponsored project on administrative development of the League secretariat at Cairo. As part of the project, the Department has assisted in purchasing a computer system, financed by the Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organizations (AGFUND).

B. Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis

13. Apart from providing the Secretariat of the League of Arab States with statistical and methodological information, the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis carries out research and analysis in the areas of population, global development issues and policies that are of substantial use to the work of both organizations. Of particular importance are the following publications: World Population Monitoring, an analysis of current population trends and policies of all the countries and regions of the world; Abortion Policies: a Global Review; The Health Rationale for Family Planning: Timing of Births and Child Survival; and the World Economic and Social Survey. In the field of technical cooperation, the Department has continued to cooperate with the League in the maternal and child health survey being conducted by the Pan-Arab Project for Child Development (PAPCHILD).

C. Department of Public Information

14. The Department of Public Information has continued to work closely with the League of Arab States and its missions, both at headquarters and through the United Nations information centres, particularly at Cairo and Tunis, exchanging and disseminating information, and developing media liaison and partnership with

educational institutions and non-governmental organizations. The Department believes that, given the importance of increasing cooperation with the League, and its role as an important regional organization, matters related to the dissemination of information and cooperation for the promotion of pluralistic and independent media should be included in the annual inter-agency sectoral meetings on areas of priority in the development of Arab States.

D. United Nations Office at Vienna

15. The Office for Outer Space Affairs has collaborated with the League of Arab States particularly in promoting international cooperation in space activities under the United Nations Programme on Space Applications. This process is being accomplished through regional and international meetings, training courses and workshops.

16. In 1994, the Office cooperated with the League in implementing recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. In addition, it organized the Fourth United Nations/European Space Agency Workshop on Basic Space Science (Cairo, 27 June-1 July 1994). In 1995, the United Nations Workshop on the Use of Space Techniques for Monitoring and Control of the Desert Environment is to be held at Damascus in November; it is organized by the Office together with the Arab Centre for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands.

17. As a follow-up to the recommendations of Agenda 21, adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the Office proposed that the League of Arab States co-sponsor a workshop or training course for the benefit of its member States in one of the following subjects: space techniques for monitoring and control of the desert environment; space technology for sustainable development of natural resources; applications of space techniques to prevent and combat disasters. The Office is prepared, through its Space Applications Programme, to offer the League assistance on education and training, especially in the practical applications of space technology.

E. Economic Commission for Africa

18. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the League of Arab States are in the process of negotiating an agreement which will constitute the specific legal basis for their formal cooperation. These negotiations are expected to be completed in the course of 1995.

19. The Commission has continued to cooperate with specialized organizations of the League in the following fields.

Regional cooperation for economic integration

20. The ECA subregional office based at Tangier has undertaken joint activities with some specialized organizations of the League in various development sectors aiming at promoting regional cooperation among countries of the North Africa subregion.

Promotion of trade relations

21. The Commission joined with OAU and the League to organize and to participate in the Arab/African Trade Fair which was held at Tunis in October 1993.

Information/documentation

22. The ECA Pan-African Development System (PADIS) and the Arab League Documentation Centre have cooperated intensively through exchange of information and documentation concerning the development activities of African and Arab countries.

Agriculture

23. ECA maintains close contacts with the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD) within the framework of the programme which they jointly entitled "environmentally sound nuclear science and technologies for food security, economic cooperation and sustainable development in Africa".

F. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

24. During the period under review, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) continued to coordinate and promote its joint activities with the League of Arab States and its specialized organizations as set out below.

Environment

25. The fourth session of the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for Environment approved the ESCWA initiative to establish the Joint Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab Region. Joint efforts continued for the implementation of regional priorities of Agenda 21 through participation in meetings, contribution to the formulation of appropriate recommendations and preparation of terms of reference for the non-governmental organizations. ESCWA also coordinated with both the United Nations Environment Programme and the Basel Convention secretariat to convene an Arab intergovernmental expert group meeting on transboundary movements of hazardous wastes.

Industry

26. A joint meeting with the Arab Industrial Development and Mining Organization on the standards of Arabic alphabets in informatics was held at Amman from 21-23 March 1994.

Transport

27. Within the framework of the protocol signed between ESCWA and the League, arrangements were made for closer cooperation and better coordination with the Arab League Transport Programme and the Union of Arab Railways. ESCWA participated in the study on road transport conducted by the League.

Social development

28. Efforts of the regional organizations, including the Arab Labour Organization, the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development and the AGFUND, were focused on the preparations for the World Summit for Social Development.

29. In preparation for the Fourth World Conference on Women, the Commission, in collaboration with the League and the Centre of Arab Women for Training and Research, organized the Arab Regional Preparatory Meeting from 6 to 10 November 1994.

Human settlements

30. As a result of consultations held in March 1994 with Habitat and the technical secretariat of the Arab Council of Ministers of Housing and Construction, an agreement was concluded to join efforts for the preparation of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and the periodic newsletter on human settlements in the Arab World.

Statistics

31. The cooperation materialized in three joint activities, namely, the Unified Arab Statistical Abstract, the Bulletin of Industrial Statistics in the Arab Countries, and the workshop on industrial statistics.

Energy

32. To further promote cooperation with the League of Arab States, appropriate technical and organizational machinery should be established.

Water resources

33. Preliminary discussions took place with the Secretariat of the League to establish a regional water resources council and a regional water training network.

G. United Nations Children's Fund

34. The main features of the cooperation between the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the League of Arab States were (a) promotion of the mid-decade goals for children adopted by the Arab States; (b) ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child; (c) periodic follow-up on the implementation by Governments of the Arab Plan for Childhood and its recommendations; (d) promotion of the Arab girl child, particularly girls' education, as a cross-cutting strategy; (e) support of League agencies, councils and associated organizations whose activities feed into the achievement of the above-mentioned objectives.

35. The League of Arab States and UNICEF reinforced their cooperation through several meetings held during the last two years between the UNICEF Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa and the Secretary-General of the

League. Strategies and action plans to strengthen such cooperation were worked out.

36. A special UNICEF/League of Arab States committee entrusted by the Tunis meeting with the follow-up on the implementation of the Arab Plan was expanded to incorporate the Arab Council for Childhood and Development, an associate of the Arab League. A similar committee comprising the three bodies has been active in preparing for and supervising a two-year project on the Arab girl child, the highlight of which is a specialized symposium, scheduled for the autumn of 1995.

37. UNICEF is supporting the League in updating its information and data-collecting systems, particularly those databases related to child issues. In this respect, UNICEF provided the League with the latest data and statistics on children in the Arab world. UNICEF is also supporting the PAPCHILD survey. UNICEF and the AGFUND jointly fund the PAPCHILD project, which is being implemented under the League umbrella.

38. UNICEF worked with the League and the Centre of Arab Women for Training and Research to incorporate children's and women's concerns into the Plan of Action for Arab Women, formulated in November 1994 and submitted to the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in September 1995.

39. The UNICEF Regional Office in the Middle East and North Africa coordinated with the League's Arab States Broadcasting Union in the distribution of a radio magazine series to Arab radio stations. This was the second such cooperation with this specialized organization of the League. Two training workshops for radio/television script-writers and producers were organized with the Arab States Broadcasting Union training centre at Damascus in 1993 and 1994, respectively.

40. Other areas of cooperation between the two organizations have dealt with primary education issues, the environment, population issues, human resources development in rural areas and structural adjustment programmes.

H. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

41. During the period under review, cooperation between the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the League of Arab States and its specialized organizations was further strengthened through the UNCTAD intersectoral project on prospects for the sustained development of the Palestinian economy in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Part One of the project, dealing with an assessment of the current situation, needs and measures for immediate action, has been completed and a detailed programme of technical assistance for the Palestinian people has been drawn up. Once it is approved by the Palestinian Authority, it will be submitted to sources of funding, including the League, whose collaboration will also be sought in the implementation of the programme.

42. Other parts of the project, including a study on the longer-term prospects for promoting the sustainable development of the Palestinian economy and a

technical assistance programme, will be finalized in 1995. The involvement of the League and its specialized organizations in the funding and implementation of this programme will be sought. The UNCTAD secretariat is also preparing an in-depth study on the regional dimensions of the Palestinian economy and consultations will be held with the League on the substantive scope and orientation of the study.

43. Cooperation between the UNCTAD secretariat and the League has been further strengthened in connection with the Arab external sector through the provision of technical assistance to Arab countries. A programme on Arab State economy and trade has been finalized by UNCTAD in collaboration with the Arab Trade Financing Programme, the International Trade Centre and UNDP. The programme covers trade policy reforms, trade efficiency and human resources development.

44. An UNCTAD technical mission attended a meeting of Arab experts on the impact of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations on Arab economies, which was held at Cairo from 4 to 7 July 1994.

45. In close cooperation with the League and its specialized organizations and the World Trade Organization secretariat, UNCTAD and UNDP organized a regional symposium on the evaluation of the implications of the Uruguay Round for Arab countries, which was held at Casablanca from 21 to 23 November 1994.

I. United Nations Development Programme

46. The areas of cooperation between the League of Arab States and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) are summarized below.

Exchange of information

47. The Regional Bureau for Arab States exchanges information with the League on UNDP initiatives and mandates through briefings given to ambassadors of the States members of the League accredited to the United Nations. Generally, two meetings are held before the sessions in February and June of the UNDP Governing Council.

Direct support to the Arab League

48. UNDP supported the establishment of a modern and sophisticated documentation and information centre for the Arab League in collaboration with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. UNDP also supported an Arab Regional Information System Network which builds on previous assistance to the Arab League Documentation Centre in its efforts to create an information network in the Arab region.

49. The League of Arab States and the Arab Labour Organization (ALO) are participating in the Arab Declaration on Social Development with UNDP and ESCWA as well as the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, AGFUND and ILO. This project has supported the production of a draft Arab declaration.

Joint Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab Region

50. The Regional Bureau for Arab States confirmed its commitment to participating in the work of the League's Joint Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab Region and accordingly designated the UNDP Cairo field office as its representative and focal point.

Cooperation with the specialized and associated organizations of the League

51. UNDP continues to execute and to cost-share projects with the League and the following of its specialized and associated organizations: Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, Arab Organization for Agricultural Development, Arab Telecommunication Union, Arab Monetary Fund and Arab Trade Financing Programme, Inter-Arab Investment Guarantee Corporation, Arab Maritime Transport Academy, Arab Industrial Development and Mining Organization, Arab Civil Aviation Council, Arab Postal Union and Arab Labour Organization.

52. With regard to further cooperation with the League, the Regional Bureau believes that regular consultations on issues of concern to the Arab region should be systematized. Issues relating to environment, intra-Arab trade, human development and energy should be given the highest priority. Similarly, the League and its specialized organizations should be consulted, to the extent possible, in the preparation of regional reports for various regional and international development conferences.

53. The level of project execution by and cost-sharing with the League and its specialized organizations could be increased through intensive participation in the preparation of regional programmes, mid-term reviews and evaluations. Parallel financing of regional projects is yet another form of collaboration.

54. The mechanisms that could be considered for enhancing collaboration between UNDP and the League, which should be founded on the premise of ensuring networking and complementarity of efforts, are exchange of information between the League and its specialized organizations and UNDP on programmatic matters; participation of UNDP in the various annual conferences of the specialized organizations; participation of the League and its specialized organizations in meetings of resident representatives; and systematic quarterly briefings in New York of League ambassadors accredited to the United Nations.

J. United Nations Environment Programme

55. Cooperation between the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the League of Arab States, especially the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment and the specialized organizations of the League, entered a new phase in 1994. The following five programmes were the subject of a joint programme activity of the three bodies, with a total budget of US$ 1.2 million (UNEP provided $600,000 for these activities):

(a) Combating desertification and increasing the green area;

(b) Combating industrial pollution;

(c) Environmental education, awareness and information;

(d) ervation of biodiversity;

(e) Establishment of a network on environmental information.

56. As an immediate follow-up to the meeting of the Executive Director with the Secretary-General of the League, the Director of the UNEP Regional Office for West Asia and representative to the League initiated action to develop a framework for implementation of the remaining parts of the Arab programmes for sustainable development of nomadic areas; human settlements; institutional development and support; marine environment and coastal areas; human resource development; development of the rational use of water resources; development of environmentally sound technologies; and protection of monuments and historical areas.

57. The biennium 1994-1995 is thus a landmark in UNEP cooperation with the League of Arab States system and marks a significant change from ad hoc, sporadic activities to a concerted programme for environmentally sustainable development.

K. United Nations Population Fund

58. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the League of Arab States continue to strengthen their cooperation in the field of population and sustainable development. One of the major achievements of this cooperation is the establishment of the Population Research Unit, a permanent structure in the League which is responsible for undertaking population and population-related research for advocacy and policy matters. With UNFPA assistance, the Unit through the years has played an important role of sensitizing ministerial councils of health and social affairs on population and human development issues.

59. During the International Conference on Population and Development, the Unit was instrumental in mobilizing League resources to assist in organizing high-level meetings to brief the heads of delegations on the Conference Programme of Action and in reaching a common understanding and consensus among Arab States in support of the Conference and its Programme of Action.

60. In addition to its policy and advocacy role, the Population Research Unit is conducting, with the financial and technical support of UNFPA, a regional research programme including analysis of demographic, socio-economic and health data at country and regional levels; policy-oriented research on migration; studies on Arab women in society and their contribution to development; and dissemination of population information. Most importantly, the Unit is using its research programme to contribute to the strengthening of national capabilities in data analysis and policy formulation through the organization of a series of training workshops using the data of the PAPCHILD maternal and child health survey.

61. The Pan-Arab Project for Child Development (PAPCHILD) is another joint and successful effort between UNFPA and the League; it is also supported by AGFUND, the World Health Organization, UNICEF, the International Planned Parenthood Federation, the World Bank and the United Nations.

L. United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

62. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) places a high priority on maintaining a close working relationship with the League of Arab States. To this end, the Agency has sought to foster contacts between UNRWA officials and the League Secretariat at various levels and in various forums. UNRWA regularly participates in the sectoral meetings organized by the League and attends the annual meeting of its Education Council.

63. UNRWA appreciates the ongoing support of the League for UNRWA programmes and its continuing efforts to urge member States to increase voluntary contributions to the Agency's regular budget. In the current reporting period, Arab League member States contributed generously to the UNRWA regular budget and special assistance programmes in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. UNRWA maintains excellent relations with member States, in particular the host Governments of Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, whose support, and that of the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority, is invaluable in helping the Agency to provide basic services to Palestine refugees.

M. United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

64. During the period under review, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) continued to explore ways to strengthen its cooperation with the League of Arab States. While no major technical cooperation activities were undertaken, every opportunity was seized to energize the cooperation between the two organizations, mainly through reciprocal representation at each other's major meetings and the following joint meetings related to the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II):

(a) First Arab Preparatory Meeting for Habitat II, held in March 1994, hosted by the Government of Jordan and organized by Habitat, in cooperation with ESCWA;

(b) Meeting held in October 1994, hosted by the Government of the United Arab Emirates and organized by Habitat, the League and ESCWA, which recommended the drafting of an Arab declaration on human settlements issues as a regional input to Habitat II;

(c) Meeting of the Council of Arab Ministers for Social Affairs, held at League headquarters at Cairo in December 1994, in which Habitat participated as an observer.

N. International Labour Organization

65. During the period 1994-1995, cooperation between the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the League of Arab States and the Arab Labour Organization (ALO) was further strengthened by the implementation of a number of joint activities.

66. The International Labour Organization participated in all sessions of the ALO Governing Body and the Arab Labour Conference; it also attended the Conference on Family Rights (Cairo, May 1994) and participated in the meeting organized by the League on the implications of structural adjustment programmes on the population (Cairo, January 1995). In collaboration with ESCWA and the League, ILO participated in the preparatory expert meeting on the Arab Declaration on Social Development (Amman, September 1994), to which ILO contributed three studies on poverty alleviation.

67. Within the framework of the ILO/ALO joint programme agreed upon at the beginning of 1994, five Arab regional seminars/expert group meetings were organized on the following topics: employment and labour market policies; small enterprises development (for employers' organizations); employment and labour market programmes in the context of sustainable human development; and Arab and international labour standards.

68. The two labour organizations are jointly implementing two regional projects relating to labour administration and migration.

69. As in the past year, ILO held consultations with the League and ALO on the situation of workers in Palestine and the occupied Arab territories in preparation for the International Labour Conference.

O. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

70. Cooperation between the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the League of Arab States continued during 1994-1995 in technical fields of mutual interest in the areas of agriculture and rural development, natural resources and environment protection, human resources training and global economic and social development.

71. The FAO Regional Office for the Near East and FAO technical divisions conducted and/or contributed to the preparation of the following studies: range-dependent small ruminants production systems in the Near East region; range and livestock development in the Arab world; integration of biotechnology for sustainable agriculture and rural development in the Arab countries; techno-economic aspects of the utilization of agro-industrial residues in the Near East region; human resources development and people's participation in the Arab countries; desertification in the Arab world; energy for sustainable agriculture and rural development; and advanced and modern efficient irrigation technology.

72. FAO and AOAD jointly organized a meeting on animal production and health services in the Arab region and the Near East (Cairo, September 1994). FAO and

the Joint Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab Region organized the preparatory expert consultation for the Pan-Arab Ministerial Conference on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (Cairo, September 1994). The expert consultation on the management and sustainable development of dry lands in the Arab world (Syrian Arab Republic, November 1994) was organized jointly by the International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas, FAO, AOAD, the Arab Centre for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands and ESCWA under the umbrella of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Plant Production and Protection.

73. A memorandum of understanding was agreed upon between FAO and AOAD to develop a programme of cooperation in the field of women in agriculture and rural development, within the framework of the FAO Regional Plan of Action for Women in Agriculture in the Near East (1996-2000).

74. In the field of fisheries development, FAO continued to enhance its technical cooperation activities with specialized organizations of the League. An agreement was reached to strengthen the fisheries training centre of the Arab Academy for Science and Technology; technical support and advisory services to the INFOSAMAK Centre continued to be provided directly by a Regional Fisheries Officer in the FAO Regional Office.

P. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

75. Efforts continue to be made to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO), which has been invited to participate in the UNITWIN/UNESCO chairs programme. A UNESCO/ALECSO mixed commission is now elaborating the text of a new agreement on cooperation between the two organizations.

76. A number of activities have been implemented by the UNESCO Regional Office for Education in the Arab States since 1993 with the active cooperation of ALECSO and the Arab States Regional Literacy Organization, notably regional seminars and expert meetings related to women's literacy, adult education and the programme entitled "Universalization and renewal of primary education and eradication of adult illiteracy in the Arab States by the year 2000" (ARABUPEAL).

77. The UNESCO Regional Office for Science and Technology for the Arab States continues to take part in the Arab League workshop on appropriate technologies for the utilization of groundwater. A Regional Office staff member participates in two committees of the League dealing with environment and development for the coordination and promotion of environmental activities in the Arab region.

Q. International Civil Aviation Organization

78. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has maintained close liaison with the League of Arab States on matters relating to civil aviation, particularly through the ICAO Middle East Regional Office at Cairo.

79. The League of Arab States was invited to relevant ICAO meetings, including the area meeting on facilitation (Cairo, June 1994). Other areas of ICAO cooperation with members of the League include the aerodrome emergency planning seminar (Cairo, April 1994); the dangerous goods seminar (Amman, June 1994); and the combined communications, navigation and surveillance/air traffic management and satellite communications seminar (Cairo, August-September 1994).

R. World Health Organization

80. The World Health Organization/Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean (WHO/EMRO) has collaborated with the League of Arab States in the area of health through close cooperation between EMRO and the Council of Arab Ministers of Health. Important examples of such collaboration are given below.

Formulation of the Arab Strategy for Health Development

81. The final draft of the Arab Strategy for Health Development was prepared with the active participation of technical staff from the Regional Office in various health fields. In addition, WHO/EMRO's views were presented both in 1994 and 1995 during a meeting on a common strategy to combat drug abuse.

Environmental health

82. The Joint Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab Region has been trying to achieve the utmost degree of coordination possible among the Arab environmental action programmes adopted by the members of the Committee, through the exchange of information related to environmental action schemes and programmes of each member, and showing ways of cooperation to implement them.

83. Accordingly, the Division on Environmental Health in the Regional Office closely collaborates with the technical secretariat of the Joint Committee with regard to topics related to environmental health risk assessment and management. EMRO has actively participated in the various meetings organized by the League of Arab States.

84. WMO/EMRO is also collaborating with the Arab Urban Development Institute at Riyadh in the development of a healthy cities project and a healthy cities network for the Arab States.

Child health

85. A milestone in relations with the League of Arab States was the signing of the document for the multi-agency Pan-Arab Project for Child Development. WHO/EMRO is closely involved in the technical preparation and implementation of this project.

86. EMRO has taken an active part in collaborating with the League in finalizing a proposal for an Arab Plan of Action for the Protection and Promotion of the Health of Children in the Arab World.

Pharmaceuticals

87. EMRO is collaborating with the Supreme Arab Committee for Drug Affairs and the Arab Union of the Manufacturers of Pharmaceuticals and Medical Appliances. The main areas of collaboration include harmonization of drug registration requirements; preparation of the Arab Pharmacopoeia; promotion of drug industry in the Arab countries; development of Arab guidelines in various technical areas; and bulk drug procurement.

88. WHO has developed cooperation with ALECSO in areas that include the rehabilitation and care of disabled persons in the Arab countries and the integrated education of students with disabilities.

S. World Bank

89. The World Bank's Middle East and North Africa region office and the League of Arab States have been looking into the possibility of mounting joint activities in the region. An environmental strategy for Arab countries was launched last fall. The event was a joint activity with the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for Environment. The two organizations hope to build further on the solid cooperative base established on environment to raise awareness of similar development issues in the area.

T. Universal Postal Union

90. The regional technical cooperation activities of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) are coordinated with the Arab Permanent Postal Commission, which has replaced the Arab Postal Union and is composed of all the postal administrations of the member countries of the League of Arab States.

91. With respect to the Arab countries, five priority areas have been identified for 1991-1995, namely, (a) management restructuring; (b) knowledge of the market and commercial strategies; (c) quality of service and operational strategies; (d) human resources and training; (e) acquisition of technology related to postal building and installations. On the basis of these priorities, several group training activities were organized or programmed in recent years using the resources of UPU.

92. In addition, a symposium of Directors-General of Arab postal services was held at Cairo in cooperation with the League of Arab States, with a view to following up the Washington General Action Plan and defining Arab postal strategy for the coming years.

93. Two group training activities were planned for 1995: a marketing course in the Syrian Arab Republic in June 1995 and a postal security course in Egypt in October 1995.

U. International Telecommunication Union

94. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) has maintained and strengthened its relationship with the League of Arab States. In this context, ITU has kept the technical secretariat of the League informed of the progress of the MODARABTEL regional project regarding its final activity and training course on data communication. The Union attended a large number of meetings of League committees and subcommittees. Likewise, the League attended a number of ITU meetings, namely the World Telecommunication Development Conference (Buenos Aires, March 1994) and the Plenipotentiary Conference at Kyoto, September-October 1994.

95. ITU was instrumental in helping the technical secretariat of the League to conduct training courses and joint regional seminars, specifically in the setting up of a mechanism through the ITU annual plan of training courses and workshops to fulfil to the extent possible the requirements of the Arab countries.

V. World Meteorological Organization

96. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) participated at the eleventh session of the Permanent Meteorological Committee of the League of Arab States in January 1995. It continues to assist the Committee in the achievement of its objectives and goals by implementing its recommendations and decisions related to the promotion of meteorological and hydrological services in support of sustainable development in the Arab States.

97. WMO is also a member of the Joint Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab Region. The Organization continues to assist the regional meteorological training centres established in the Arab region.

98. In addition, cooperation has continued between members of the League and the International Monetary Fund, the World Food Programme and the World Trade Organization.

W. International Fund for Agricultural Development

99. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the League of Arab States continued to attend each other's meetings as observers. During the period under review periodic contacts between the Secretariat of the League and IFAD have been maintained. The two organizations exchange relevant information and publications, particularly on programmes designed to combat desertification.

100. In addition to direct project financing, IFAD has been supporting, through the technical assistance grant programme, various regional agricultural research institutions in the Arab world, such as the Arab Centre for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands and the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development. The IFAD grant resources have been used by these two institutions to finance the development of agricultural technologies suitable to the Fund's target groups in

the Arab region, such as the date palm research and development network programme, the programme on regional farming systems in the region, and the research and development of wheat and barley in the semi-arid zones.

101. Furthermore, IFAD has provided AOAD with grants for training programmes with the objective of strengthening the institutional capabilities of Arab countries for project preparation and implementation of rural development projects.

X. United Nations Industrial Development Organization

102. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) has continued to maintain close cooperation with the League of Arab States and its specialized organizations.

103. Within the framework of three agreements on cooperation signed in 1988, 1989 and 1994, joint activities were undertaken in various industrial spheres, including preparation of feasibility studies and investment project profiles, organization of training workshops, assistance in the establishment of data banks, conducting of industrial surveys and promotion of joint Arab investment projects. As a recent activity in the context of cooperation with the Arab Industrial Development and Mining Organization, a working document on the potential for Arab cooperation in industrial development was prepared for the 1994 ministerial meeting.

104. A new mechanism for regional industrial cooperation was initiated by UNIDO under the Special Programme for Industrial Development in the Arab Countries, with a view to strengthening inter-State cooperation (bilateral, subregional and regional) and to meeting the needs of the Arab least developed countries. In cooperation with the League and other regional organizations the priority areas of the Special Programme have been defined.

105. Current UNIDO activities include a meeting on cooperation for the development of joint projects in the field of catalysts and/or production of lubricating oil additives in selected developing countries; a workshop for the development of cooperation and production of machine tools in the Gulf region; a capacity-building programme in technology transfer negotiation in the Arab countries, phase I: regional training workshop, Amman; assessment of instrumentation facilities and services available in the countries of the Western Asia region; and a consultative meeting on strategies for development of marine agricultural and industrial biotechnology in the Arab region.

106. At a recent meeting with the League's Departments of Economic Relations and Productive Sectors and Environment, some additional areas of cooperation, such as industrial statistics, environmental protection and pollution control, the implications of the Uruguay Round agreements for the manufactures of Arab countries, and petrochemicals, have been identified and concrete projects are currently under review.

IV. GENERAL MEETING ON COOPERATION BETWEEN THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SECRETARIATS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM AND THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES AND ITS SPECIALIZED ORGANIZATIONS, VIENNA, 19-21 JULY 1995

107. As recommended by the General Assembly in its resolution 49/14, the general meeting on cooperation between the representatives of the secretariats of the United Nations system and the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States and its specialized organizations was held at Vienna from 19 to 21 July 1995. This occasion marked the fiftieth anniversary of both the United Nations and the League of Arab States.

108. Representatives of the following bodies of the United Nations system and the League of Arab States participated in the meeting:

(a) United Nations system: United Nations Secretariat, including Department for Development Support and Management Services, Department of Humanitarian Affairs, Department of Political Affairs and Department of Public Information; United Nations Office at Vienna, including Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch and Office for Outer Space Affairs; Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia; United Nations Children's Fund; United Nations Development Programme; United Nations Environment Programme; United Nations Population Fund; United Nations International Drug Control Programme; United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East; United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat); International Labour Organization; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; International Telecommunication Union; World Meteorological Organization; World Health Organization; International Fund for Agricultural Development; United Nations Industrial Development Organization; and International Atomic Energy Agency;

(b) League of Arab States: League of Arab States Secretariat, Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD), Arab Academy for Science and Technology (AAST), Arab Centre for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands (ACSAD), Arab Industrial Development and Mining Organization (AIDMO), Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA), Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO), Arab Labour Organization (ALO), Arab Authority for Agricultural Investment and Development (AAAID), Arab Atomic Energy Agency (AAEA), Council of Arab Interior Ministers (AIMC) and Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organizations (AGFUND).

109. The meeting had before it 22 working papers prepared by the Centre for Disarmament Affairs, the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch, the Department for Humanitarian Affairs, the Department of Political Affairs, the Department for Development Support and Management Services, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the International Labour Organization, the International Telecommunication Union, the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Office

for Outer Space Affairs, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the Arab Academy for Science and Technology, the Arab Atomic Energy Agency, the Arab Centre for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands, the Arab Industrial Development and Mining Organization and the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization.

110. The meeting adopted the following agenda:

I. Review and appraisal of cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States and future prospects.

II. Maintaining international peace and security:

(a) Preventive diplomacy and peace-making;

(b) Disarmament.

III. Mine clearance.

IV. Follow-up in other areas:

(a) Human resources development in rural areas (sectoral meeting at Vienna, July 1994);

(b) United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa;

(c) Implementation of programmes of action adopted by international conferences;

(d) Agenda 21 (environment and sustainable development);

(e) Drug control and crime prevention.

V. Commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations and the League of Arab States.

111. The opening session of the meeting was devoted to the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations and the League of Arab States. Statements by the Co-Chairmen and representatives of the United Nations system and the League took stock of the cooperation achieved thus far and suggested ways and means to further strengthen and expand collaboration between the two organizations.

112. In the course of their deliberations, the representatives of the organizations of the United Nations system and the League and its specialized organizations undertook a critical review and appraisal of progress in cooperation. The meeting recognized the importance of continuing cooperation between the two organizations with a view to contributing to the maintenance of international peace and security and to promoting social and economic development.

113. At the meeting, the League of Arab States reiterated its firm commitment to supporting the United Nations in achieving the goals and objectives set out in the Charter with regard to ensuring international peace and security and the promotion of freedom, sovereignty and progress for all peoples.

114. The meeting pointed out the importance of preventive diplomacy as an effective tool in easing political tensions and defusing potential crises that might lead to armed conflicts in different regions of the world.

115. It was agreed that the confidence-building measures and other preventive measures proposed by the United Nations Secretary-General in his report entitled "An Agenda for Peace" and the supplement thereto should be elaborated in coordination and in consultation with the relevant regional organizations in order to help improve the United Nations capacity for dealing with threats to international peace and security. Regular contacts and consultations between the United Nations and the League of Arab States would contribute to achieving these objectives.

116. The meeting stressed the importance of dealing with disarmament issues through a comprehensive approach covering all States as well as all weapons of mass destruction. Security and stability in the Middle East require that the region be made a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons.

117. The meeting stressed the humanitarian element of the ever-growing problem caused by the presence of land-mines and other unexploded devices as a result of armed conflicts and expressed deep concern over the serious social and economic consequences for the populations of mine-infested countries.

118. It was agreed that international cooperation to provide technical and financial support to mine-affected countries is essential to create and strengthen national capacities in mine clearance. The meeting emphasized that the only way to stop the proliferation of land-mines is through a total ban on the production, use and transfer of mines.

119. The meeting agreed to further consolidate and strengthen cooperation in the six areas called for in General Assembly resolution 49/14 (see para. 10 above). In this context, the participants focused on such issues as joint projects to combat desertification; human resources development in rural areas; projects regarding human settlements; activities in the fields of industry, maritime transportation, telecommunications and postal service; trade; labour and employment; education, science and culture; health; environment; population, including the Pan-Arab Project for Child Development; crime prevention and criminal justice and drug control; services provided to Palestinian refugees; and outer space affairs.

120. The items of the agenda were considered by the working groups composed of representatives of the departments, organizations and bodies concerned. Proposals and recommendations emanating from discussions as well as those contained in the working papers were incorporated in the Final Document adopted at the closing session of the general meeting. The Final Document was transmitted by the United Nations Secretariat to all the participating United

Nations organizations and to the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States in August 1995.

121. Finally, the meeting was informed that the High-level Coordination Committee of the League and its specialized organizations had identified seven priority sectors for enhancing cooperation within the United Nations system, namely, energy; rural development; desertification and green belts; training and vocational training; technology; environment; and information and documentation. The United Nations and the specialized agencies of the United Nations system agreed to study these proposals and to respond to the League of Arab States.

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GENERAL LEBATE

Letter dated 28 September 1995 from the Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

As you are aware, Mr. Javier Solana, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Spain, indicated in his statement to the General Assembly on 26 September 1995 in his capacity as President of the Council of the European Union that he would shorten his statement in order to speed up the work of the General Assembly.

Accordingly, in my capacity as Representative of the Office of the President of the European Union, I have the honour to transmit to you the complete, authentic text of the statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Spain in English, French and Spanish, and to request that it be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under agenda item 9.

(Signed) Juan A. YAÑEZ-BARNUEVO

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ANNEX

Statement made by the President of the Council of the European Union and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Spain to the General Assembly on 26 September 1995

Mr. President,

First of all I should like to convey to you my most cordial and sincere congratulations on your election as President of this Assembly. Both Spain, Portugal's sister country, and the European Union, on behalf of which I have the honour to address this Assembly today, are confident that your work will meet with the greatest success throughout the session that is now starting. I am firmly convinced that your experience as an eminent Professor of International Law and your thorough knowledge of international relations will contribute decisively to achieve the ambitious objectives that lie ahead of us.

I would also like to thank Minister Amara Essy of the Côte D'Ivoire for the excellent manner in which he conducted our deliberations during the previous session.

Likewise, I wish to express my appreciation to the Secretary-General, Dr. Boutros-Ghali, together with my congratulations on his work and his tireless efforts.

Mr. President,

I am addressing this Assembly on behalf of the European Union which has been enlarged to 15 Members States since the beginning of this year, thereby reinforcing its capacity to fulfill its commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. In the year of the 50th Anniversary of the United Nations, the European Union, which is fully aware of the complexity of the challenges faced by the International Community, wishes to reiterate its full support for our Organization as a universal forum to realise mankind's aspirations for peace and security and economic and social progress.

From this perspective, the European Council, at its meeting held in Cannes on 26 and 27 June, paid tribute to the work of our Organisation in its solemn declaration commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the signing of the United Nations Charter in San Francisco. Undoubtedly, the outcome of half a century of United Nations activities is impressive.

The United Nations has contributed to the progressive codification and consolidation of international law, to the maintenance of international peace and security in cooperation with the regional organisations, to disarmament, to arms control, to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, to decolonisation, to development and humanitarian assistance, to the protection and promotion of human rights, and above all, to cooperation between the nations of the world in the most diverse spheres.

Mr. President,

As the Secretary-General rightly points out in his report on the work of the Organisation, setbacks must not be allowed to overshadow the successes achieved by the United Nations. Through steady and diligent work, our Organisation must make obvious to world public opinion the solid foundations on which its credibility is based. The Members States of the European Union are willing to cooperate in the enhancing of the United Nations' image.

Within a few weeks, the Heads of State and Government of the whole world will solemnly commemorate the Anniversary of the founding of our Organisation, born 50 years ago for the purpose of preserving coming generations from the scourge of war.

Although this occasion will give us an opportunity to appraise the work done by the Organisation over the course of its already long history, we must above all reflect on the best way to prepare the United Nations to meet effectively the challenges facing us at the end of this century. Let me recall, with regard to the present moment of the United Nations, a thought expressed by Jean Monnet in respect of the European Community, when the latter was taking its first steps: "This is only a stage towards the forms of organisation of the world of tomorrow."

Indeed, the disappearance of old rivalries has not meant the end of conflicts. Today we witness ethnic and nationalistic conflicts and humanitarian crises of frightening proportions, the worsening of economic inequalities, contempt for human rights and the systematic violation of the rules of international humanitarian law, genocide, the risk of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the alarming deterioration of the environment. These are some of the most serious problems that we face today. They affect us all, and we all must undertake to solve them.

Mr. President,

Although as usual, issues that are a cause of concern to the European Union are reflected in detail in the memorandum distributed as part of this speech, I would like to highlight some questions that are especially important to us : the situation in the former Yugoslavia, developments in Africa, and the peace process in the Middle East.

Mr. President,

The European Union continues to attach priority importance to reaching a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement for the conflict that ravages the territory of the former Yugoslavia. In this regard, we state our full support for the diplomatic process currently under way and our satisfaction for the first results of this process reached at the meeting that took place in Geneva last September 8.

We consider that the United Nations Forces in the territories of former Yugoslavia have played and continue to play a fundamental role in containing the conflicts, contributing in many cases to stabilizing the situation on the ground and facilitating the negotiation efforts towards peace. Member States of the European Union are among the main troop contributors to this Forces. I want to pay tribute to the United Nations Forces and pay homage to the soldiers that have fallen for peace, many of them citizens of the Union. We firmly believe that the United Nations must continue to play a relevant role in the efforts to achieve peace and to implement the agreements reached.

The European Union has substantially contributed to alleviate the great suffering that the war in the former Yugoslavia, and particularly in Bosnia-Herzegovina, has inflicted upon the population. I wish to express our firm commitment to continue providing humanitarian assistance, both bilaterally and through the relevant United Nations organisms and agencies.

After more than three years of bloody conflict, the latest developments towards the initiation of a peace process allow us to look forward with greater hope. Within the framework of that peace process, which we hope is near at hand, the European Union, commensurate to its engagement, intends to play an active role in all aspects of the implementation of the peace process, in particular, with regard to its reconstruction. Violence has destroyed human lives, property and the peaceful coexistence among different peoples. Our main task will be, thus, to restore hope and offer decent living conditions to those who still suffer the consequences of this catastrophe.

Mr. President,

The European Union is aware of the great challenges facing Africa. Proof of our concern is that we are working to find peaceful solutions to the conflict in Rwanda and the conflict in Burundi, starting with the more urgent problem of the return of refugees. We fully support the urgent convening of a conference under the auspices of the United Nations, aimed at peace and stability in the Great Lakes region.

Likewise, we support the initiatives for social and political reconstruction in countries such as Angola and Mozambique, and welcome the work accomplished by our Organisation in Angola which, following the Lusaka Peace Agreement, has allowed for the establishment of UNAVEM III.

We also favour a more active role of the Organisation for African Unity in the prevention and solution of conflicts in Africa, and we are considering ways of supporting the establishment of effective mechanisms for preventive diplomacy and peacekeeping.

The European Union follows with keen interest the spread of and respect for human rights throughout the continent, and we are very much aware of the situation of dire need of some nations. After the revision of the IV Lomé Convention, the European Union has given particular relevance to humanitarian and food assistance, and we have made an effort to update our development cooperation programmes.

Mr. President,

The European Union has always strongly upheld the peace process in the Middle East, initiated at the 1991 Conference held in Madrid. We warmly welcome the Interim Agreement reached recently by Israel and the Palestinian National Authority, which represents a new and a very important milestone in this process and look forward to the signing of such an Agreement this coming Thursday. Likewise, we are confident that, in the coming months, we will see significant progress in the Syrian and Lebanese negotiation tracks, and that the whole region, which has already suffered enormously, will finally enter in the dynamics of a comprehensive, just and long-lasting peace.

The European Union attaches paramount importance to the work carried out in general by our Organisation in general, and in particular by this Assembly, in favour of peace in the Middle East. One of our objectives in the sessions about to begin is to ensure that the various resolutions adopted by this Assembly on the situation in the Middle East contribute directly to the peace process. Following the guidelines established in previous years, the European Union is determined to continue to work with the interested parties in order to ensure that the text of the resolutions reflect the new realities in the area.

I should also like to remind this Assembly that, in two months' time, Europe will be meeting its Western and Eastern Mediterranean neighbors. The aim of the Barcelona Euro-Mediterranean Conference is no other than to cooperate in the definition of the future relations between participating States and to guarantee the stability and prosperity of the Mediterranean through political dialogue, balanced and lasting economic and social development, the fight against poverty and a more thorough mutual understanding of the different cultures through the enhancement of the human dimension.

Mr. President,

Let me conclude this part of my statement with a reference to the work of the Organisation in Latin America.

Its presence in Nicaragua through ONUCA, ONUVEN and the International Commission for Support and Verification allowed for national reconciliation and the holding of elections.

The mediation between the parties and the work of ONUSAL led to the historic achievement of ending the long and terrible civil conflict in El Salvador, enshrined in the Chapultepec Agreements of January 1992. Today, the presence of MINUSAL, which has the support of the European Union, contributes effectively to overcoming the obstacles that still persist.

In Haiti, the Multinational Force and UNMIH played a fundamental role in the restoration of democracy and in the reconstruction of the country. In Guatemala, the United Nation's role as moderator and the work of MINUGUA have brought about substantive agreements on issues as important as human rights, displaced persons and indigenous populations, which we are confident will lead to a speedy solution to the conflict. The participation of international observers in the coming elections in November, that is supported by the European Union, seems to us an effective formula. All these achievements have been fulfilled with the invaluable help of the various Groups of Friends and the support of the international community.

Mr. President,

Conscious of the universality of the challenges that lie ahead for our Organisation, the European Union attaches great importance to the adoption of measures allowing for the success and proper functioning of the United Nations in implementing the mandates entrusted to it by the Member States.

In this sense, the Organisation's serious financial crisis, unprecedented in its history, seriously endangers the United Nations' capacity for action and is a reason of great concern for the European Union. Our Organisation will become powerless if it does not receive the necessary political support from its Member States and the resources provided by them through the full, punctual and unconditional payment of their financial contributions in accordance with the obligations established by the Charter.

Therefore, the solution of the Organisation's financial crisis is a priority objective for the European Union, which overall is the main contributor, both to the Organisation's regular budget and to the Peacekeeping Operations budgets.

Mr. President,

The European Union considers that the main cause of the United Nations' serious financial crisis is the lack of political will to discharge the financial obligations undertaken by the Member States on signing the United Nations Charter. Aware of their political commitment to the Organisation's objectives, the Member States of the European Union, had paid, at 30 June, over 50% of the total contributions collected for financing, both the regular budget and those for peacekeeping operations.

Additionally, two Member States of the Union - my country, Spain, together with Portugal - were the first to transfer voluntarily from the "C" Group to the "B" Group of contributors to the budgets of Peacekeeping Operations.

This constructive attitude has prevailed in the active participation of the European Union in the High-level Working Group on the financial situation of the United Nations. Our objective is to reach a consensus, as soon as possible, and preferably during this session, on the adoption of specific measures designed to bring about an improvement in the Organisation's financial situation.

The European Union wishes to underline the increasingly urgent need to adopt a global package of measures to solve the United Nations' financial crisis. These measures should contemplate, inter alia, a possible review of the scale of assessments so that it reflects as accurately as possible the principle of the capacity to pay, as well as the establishment of incentives and disincentives to encourage all Member States to comply with their financial obligations in accordance with the Charter.

Mr. President,

The European Union considers that the existence of a solid and viable financial basis is an essential factor with a view to approaching the revitalisation, strengthening and reform of the United Nations. Using this criterion as a guideline, the European Union will participate constructively in the work of the High Level Working Group established by Resolution 49/252, and in the debate on the future of the Organisation which the commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the United Nations will encourage.

Mr. President,

The Agenda for Development, submitted last year by the Secretary-General, identified the five dimensions of development: peace as the foundation, the economy as the engine of progress, the environment as a basis for sustainability, justice as the pillar of society and democracy as good governance.

The European Union attaches the greatest importance to the completion, before the end of the Assembly now beginning, of a substantial and innovative agenda for development, in which it is made clear that peace cannot be built without at the same time promoting the social and economic progress of the poorest people. Through the decisions taken by the European Council held in Cannes, the European Union has made clear its determination to contribute yet greater financial resources for development aid, within the framework of both the Lomé Convention (in the case of the African, the Caribbean and the Pacific countries) and the financial cooperation with our Mediterranean partners.

Throughout this Assembly we shall pay special attention to the results of the important cycle of major conferences held over the course of recent years under the aegis of the United Nations for discussion of various subjects linked to development and human progress. These conferences have enabled us to advance towards a new global consensus on development and must contribute to strengthening the role of the Organisation in the economic and social fields.

We need the Economic and Social Council to play a more vigorous and more central role within the system; we must ensure that the work of this Assembly and that of the ECOSOC are complementary, avoiding duplications; we must review the priorities and the working methods of the Second and Third Committees; and we must, finally, develop better coordination between the specialised agencies and more constructive relations between the Organisation and the Bretton Woods Institutions.

Mr. President,

The results of the Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen will be submitted to this Assembly during the course of the session now beginning. The European Union firmly intends to actively consider these results, with a view to identify appropriate measures that ensure the follow-up and implementation of the commitments undertaken at Copenhagen.

We must not allow the platforms of action adopted at the United Nations Conferences to remain unimplemented. The European Union will lend all its support to ensure that the follow-up and implementation of the platforms for action agreed upon are carried out in a coherent and integrated way. Both this Assembly and the Economic and Social Council must be responsible for monitoring the commitments undertaken, so that these programmes are not reduced -as it has been the case some times in the past - to a mere expression of rules of conduct which do not entail any obligation for the states and international organisations competent in each case.

Mr. President,

The IV World Conference on Women concluded in Beijing only a few days ago. The Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Conference are a step forward, backed by the results of previous United Nations conferences, on the road towards the achievement of equality, development and peace. These objectives were set out in the strategies for the advancement of women adopted in Nairobi ten years ago.

The European Union has worked actively to achieve a consolidation of the results of the Vienna Conference on Human Rights in the field of human rights and fundamental liberties of women and on the Cairo Conference on Population and Development, in matters pertaining to sexual and reproductive health. The Platform for Action, adopted as a result of such concern in Beijing, includes important progress in human rights, notably the right of women to control and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, without coercion, discrimination or violence.

The European Union has likewise paid special attention to the provisions contained in the Platform for Action on equal rights in inheritance, definition of responsibilities, parental rights and obligations to provide guidance and support to children in exercising their rights and the relation between cultural and religious influences, and the responsibility of states in promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Mr. President,

Only three years ahead of the 50th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the international community cannot yet be entirely satisfied with the progress achieved. This session of the General Assembly will provide us, once again, with an opportunity to take stock of the situation regarding human rights and basic liberties in the world, two years after the important headway made at the Vienna World Conference, the outcome of which reflected the existing consensus on this issue at the turn of the century. The European Union will spare no effort to contribute to the implementation of the Vienna Declaration and its Programme for Action.

In view of the persistence of serious and systematic violations of human rights, the development of machinery for the prevention of and response to these situations becomes a priority task. In addition to the monitoring carried out by the special rapporteurs and the technical assistance provided in this area by our organization, we should explore the need to consolidate and, if necessary, establish appropriate institutions. The best preventive action is based on education. The United Nations decade for education in the sphere of human rights provides us with a special opportunity to make education programmes designed to encourage respect and tolerance available to all, especially children.

In the same context, it is increasingly evident that respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms plays a critical role in avoiding potential conflicts. Therefore, we must acknowledge the value of human rights in preventive diplomacy. Some of the serious conflicts which have recently darkened the international scene, particularly in Rwanda, Burundi and in the territory of the former Yugoslavia, are inflicting great suffering on the civilian population, as illustrated by the alarming number of displaced persons and refugees. In this regard, the European Union wishes to reiterate its support for the outstanding work being performed by the UNHCR in this field. At the same time, we are conscious of the harmful effects of ethnic and religious discrimination on the emergence and development of such conflicts and thus reaffirm our conviction of the need

to go further in the adoption of measures to fight racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia.

Mr. President,

The level of resources assigned by the Organisation to the promotion and protection of human rights -today, merely 1.7% of the Organization's regular budget- continues to be totally inadequate. Increasing these resources significantly would have a positive impact on the activities designed to boost development. Experience has shown that actions performed in the interest of human rights contribute to the greater success of development activities. It is increasingly clear that development, human rights and democracy are interlinked, as stated in the 1986 declaration on the right to development.

Furthermore, the European Union attaches great importance to the role and activities of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and wishes, once again, to draw this Assembly's attention to the pressing need to provide his Office with the human and financial resources required for the proper accomplishment of its tasks. We likewise support the Organization's efforts to enhance the role and functions of the Centre for Human Rights in Geneva, under the supervision of the High Commissioner.

Mr. President,

The International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Those Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law committed in the Former Yugoslavia, as well as the International Tribunal for Rwanda are essential factors in the struggle against the impunity of those who violate human rights. The experience of these "ad hoc" tribunals will help the work of the future International Criminal Court, whose draft statute has been drawn up by the International Law Commission and submitted to this Assembly's Sixth Committee during its last session.

The EU has followed closely the work of the "Ad Hoc" Committee for the Establishment of an International Criminal Court, whose recommendations will be taken into consideration by the Assembly now beginning. The European Union is determined to make a constructive contribution to the debate on this matter which, for some time now, has been a priority issue.

Mr. President,

Mankind is facing a growing number of humanitarian emergencies that require an effective response from the international community to enable the tragedy being suffered daily by tens of thousands of human beings to be alleviated. The setting up of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs makes an outstanding contribution to the international efforts of humanitarian assistance, a field in which the often hazardous work of the non-governmental organisations is also of paramount importance. We consider that it is essential to implement the decisions taken this year by ECOSOC on the need to review and reinforce the capacity of the United Nations System in the area of humanitarian assistance.

It is necessary to enhance cooperation between all organisations and people, in such a way that their respective contributions may be mutually complemented and strengthened, duplication of work avoided, and a humanitarian "continuum" ensured.

Mr. President,

We have witnessed important events this year in the field of the environment and in the implementation of the Rio agreements of 1992. Special mention should be made of the positive outcome of the conferences of the parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the framework Convention on Climate Change, the opening for signature of the Convention to Combat Desertification and the establishment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests, under the aegis of the Commission for Sustainable Development.

We welcome these developments and reiterate our will to continue working, within the Organization, towards greater cooperation in the field of the environment.

Mr. President,

The United Nations Charter confers upon the Organization the task of keeping international peace and security as its chief purpose, and entrusts this major responsibility to the Security Council.

The Security Council must continue to be the decision-making centre for issues which affect world security and must adapt to currently-existing situations in order to strengthen the mechanisms stipulated in the Charter.

The Open-ended Working Group on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council has continued its work during the previous sessions of this Assembly, and the members of the European Union participated actively in this work.

Mr. President,

The European Union holds the view that peacekeeping operations and preventive diplomacy missions are, and should continue to be, the focal point of the Security Council's action in favor of world peace and security. We welcome the updating of the "Agenda for Peace" presented by the Secretary-General at the beginning of this year.

I wish to remind this Assembly of the European Union's commitment to the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, illustrated by the fact that the Union as a whole is not only the main financial contributor to these operations, providing 37% of the total budget, but also the main provider of personnel. The European Union stands firmly behind this substantial commitment to the peacekeeping endeavours of the Organization. Heavy casualties have been suffered, and it is of utmost importance that every possible step is taken to ensure the safety of the UN-personnel in peacekeeping missions.

Mr. President,

The European Union considers that it is of paramount importance for the Organization to establish its own doctrine on peacekeeping operations. The long and fruitful experience gained by the Organization in the field, and the many theoretical contributions, should provide these operations with a doctrinal base that will facilitate their establishment, implementation and monitoring. Such a doctrine should provide the regional organisations, some of which already perform their duties in this area with great success, with as frame of reference on which to base their peacekeeping initiatives.

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organisations in peacekeeping endeavours should still be explored in order to optimise the use of material and human resources and to put the mandates entrusted to the missions into practice in the quickest, most efficient and successful way.

As an example of the activity of the regional organisations in this field, let me mention that in our continent, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe has already developed a mechanism, still at an embryonic stage, for preventive diplomacy, the establishment of confidence-building measures and the resolution of conflicts. Acting on an EU initiative, the CSCE decided at the Budapest Summit last year to reinforce cooperation with the United Nations and with the Transatlantic Organisations. The States participating in the Summit agreed that, in accordance with the chapter VIII of the Charter, they would make every effort to achieve the peaceful settlement of disputes arising in their territorial areas of action before referring them to the United Nations Security Council.

The European Union furthermore is studying with interest the proposals for stand-by arrangements. To this end, the Union supports the proposals for headquarters of a permanent nature and the U.N. stand-by forces system, and is studying with interest other proposals which also aim at improving the rapid reaction capability of the U.N. with a view to shortening the period for establishing a peace operation and facilitating its subsequent deployment.

Mr. President,

The European Union welcomes the great step forward taken recently within our Organization, on deciding to extend the Non-proliferation Treaty indefinitely. This amounts to fundamental progress in the whole disarmament process and the pursuit of nuclear non-proliferation. The decision adopted, together with the strengthening of the inspection procedure and the principles and objectives of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, constitute an enormous step in the right direction. We also welcome the steady pace of the negotiations for a comprehensive test ban treaty, that the European Union wishes to be concluded in 1996.

We should now concentrate our efforts on the universalisation of the Non-proliferation Treaty. The European Union invites all states that have not yet done so to become signatories of the NPT. Another European Union priority in the field of nuclear disarmament is the finalisation of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for the manufacture of nuclear weapons and explosives ("Cut-off Treaty"). The European Union regrets that the Conference on Disarmament has not yet been able to set up an ad hoc committee to begin negotiations on this issue.

Once again, we appeal to all states that signed the Convention on the Banning of the Development, Production, Storage and Use of Chemical Weapons and their Destruction, to proceed to ratify it so that it may come into force as soon as possible.

Furthermore, the control and limitation of the use of certain conventional weapons is also cause for concern for the European Union. Through its common action, the Union aims to continue to encourage the activities of the United Nations in its fight against the devastating effects of anti-personnel mines in many territories around the world. Also in the field of conventional disarmament, we will pay special attention to the results of the review conference of the 1980 Convention on Inhuman Weapons, in order to render it more effective and to widen its scope.

Mr. President,

We believe in the United Nations. We believe in the universality, binding character and supremacy of international law, which is the result of the development of relations between nations and consensus between peoples.

As expressed in the Declaration of the European Council of Cannes on the Organization's 50th anniversary, the European Union gives its unconditional support to the Organization's ideals and actions.

We are sure that these first fifty years are but the first stage in an unprecedented task that presents no other alternative, given that its chief goal -that of assuring that we all live together in peace, as well as the comprehensive development of human beings- can only be attained through disinterested cooperation between peoples.

Thank you, Mr. President.